NATION

2 accused of shooting at Disha Patani's home killed

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BUSINESS

India clears 4 ships for EU-sanctioned Nayara

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SPORTS

Neeraj Chopra qualifies for World C'ships finals

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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Arrest farmers, says SC on stubble burning

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

The Supreme Court has urged the Punjab government to consider arresting errant farmers involved in stubble burning, a significant contributor to winter air pollution. During a suo-motu hearing on the staffing of pollution control boards in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Punjab, Chief Justice of India BR Gavai said, "If you have a real intention of protecting the environment, then why shy away?" *—PTI*

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Trump says India among major drug producers

This holds significance as he wages 'drug war' on Venezuela

NEW YORK/ WASHINGTON, 17 SEPT

President Donald Trump has named China, Afghanistan, India and Pakistan among 23 major drug transit or major illicit drug producing countries, saying that by manufacturing and trafficking illicit drugs and precursor chemicals, these nations are threatening the safety of the US and its citizens.

In a 'Presidential Determination' submitted to Congress Monday, Trump said he has identified 23 countries as "major drug transit or major illicit drug producing" nations.

These nations are Afghanistan, The Bahamas, Belize, Bolivia, Burma, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Jamaica, Laos, Mexico, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela.

Trump delivered the "Major's List" to Congress, designating these countries as responsible for sourcing and transporting illicit drugs into the US, the White House said.

The State Department announced the Presidential Determination of these 23 countries, with five countries - Afghanistan, Bolivia, Burma, Colombia, and Venezuela - listed as having "failed demonstrably to make substantial efforts," calling upon them to improve their counternarcotics efforts.

On China, Trump said the country's role as the "world's largest source" of precursor chemicals fuelling illicit fentanyl production has been well documented. Trump also said that China is also a major supplier fuelling global epidemics of other synthetic narcotics, including nitazenes and methamphetamine.

On Afghanistan, he said that despite the Taliban's ban on illegal drugs, drug stockpiles and ongoing production – including expanding production of methamphetamine – have sustained the flow of drugs to international markets. "Some members of the Taliban continue to profit from this trade, and I am once again designating Afghanistan as having failed demonstrably to uphold its obligations," Trump said. *—PTI*

> **I will call on countries where these drugs originate and transit to fulfill their obligations and shut off these supplies – or face serious consequences.**
>
> -Donald Trump, US President

ED arrests ex-MUDA commissioner Dinesh Kumar

BENGALURU, 17 SEPT

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has arrested ex-MUDA commissioner Dinesh Kumar under the provisions of the anti-money laundering law related to alleged allotment of illegal sites, officials said on Wednesday.

Kumar is expected to be produced before a designated special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court in City where the agency will seek his custody, the officials said.

The arrest came after the federal probe agency on Tuesday searched two residential premises in City linked to Kumar in connection with the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA) illegal sites allocation "scam". He was placed under arrest following his questioning on Tuesday.

During his tenure as MUDA commissioner, Kumar indulged in "large-scale illegal allotment" of MUDA sites in lieu of "gratification and pecuniary benefits," the ED said.

The probe has found his "active" involvement in money laundering activities, the agency alleged.

Kumar was suspended by the State government in September last year after an internal inquiry reported large scale irregularities.

The MUDA case had alleged irregularities in land allotted to Parvathi, wife of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. However, the Supreme Court in July quashed ED the proceedings against her. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

Patna HC asks Cong to remove AI video of Modi's mom

PATNA, 17 SEPT

The Patna High Court has directed the Congress party to remove an AI-generated video featuring Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his deceased mother from its social media platforms. Acting Chief Justice P. B. Bajanthri issued the order following a petition by advocate Vivekanand Singh, who described the video as a "defamatory publication" and in violation of the Representation of the People Act. The court summoned the Union government, Rahul Gandhi, and the Election Commission as respondents. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

EVMs to feature coloured photos of candidates

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

From the upcoming Bihar assembly elections, Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) will carry colour photographs of candidates for the first time. Since 2015, the ballot papers displayed only black-and-white images, which many voters found hard to recognise. The Election Commission said the candidate's face will now occupy three-fourths of the photo space, with serial numbers printed prominently in bold, 30-point font. Names of all candidates and the NOTA option will appear in uniform size and style. *—PTI*

Khalistani outfit threatens Indian embassy in Canada

VANCOUVER, 17 SEPT

Khalistani outfit Sikhs For Justice on Wednesday called for a "siege" on the Indian consulate in Canada's Vancouver on 18 September, accusing them of running a spy network in the country to target Khalistan supporters. In statement, the SFJ said, "Two years ago Prime Minister Justin Trudeau told Parliament that the Indian agents' role was under investigation in the assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar. Two years on, Indian Consulates continue to run a spy network and surveillance." SFJ has announced a 12-hour siege of the Indian consulate, from 8am to 8pm, local time. They urged Indian-Canadians to defer their visit to the consulate on Thursday for their own safety. *—Agencies*

A massive pothole at a signal near BMTC bus station, at Shantinagar in Bengaluru ***PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ASAD***

DKS sets Nov deadline to fix City's potholes

BENGALURU, 17 SEPT

Contractors have been given a final deadline of November to fill the City's potholes, Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said.

"Contractors have been given a final deadline to fill the potholes within November to resolve the problem. Since a clean Bengaluru and smooth traffic are our goals, GBA will provide relief from potholes as soon as possible," he said in a Wednesday post on X.

Shivakumar, who is also Bengaluru Development Minister, had said on 14 September that the City is set for a major push in road development with Rs 1,100 crore allocated for repair and construction.

Notably, Shivakumar had promised last September to fix all the potholes in 15 days, a promise that came and went.

Meanwhile, Bengaluru Central City Corporation Commissioner, Rajendra Cholan on Wednesday instructed that notices should be issued to landowners of a vacant plot filled with waste on Jeevan Bima Nagar main road.

In addition, he ordered the immediate removal of unauthorised sheds built by encroaching footpaths and roads, along with penalties for the encroachers.

The Commissioner directed officials to prepare a detailed report of roads that have been dug up by the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) and also those requiring manhole repairs in the Central City Corporation limits. *—PTI*

> **Contractors have been given a final deadline to fill the potholes within November to resolve the problem. Since a clean Bengaluru and smooth traffic are our goals, GBA will provide relief from potholes as soon as possible**
>
> —DK Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister

CM vows commitment to Kalyana Karnataka

KALABURAGI, 17 SEPT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday greeted citizens on Kalyana Karnataka Liberation Day and laid the foundation stone for development projects worth Rs 649.47.

Of these, foundation stones were laid for 133 projects worth Rs 570.05 crore, while 26 projects worth Rs 79.41 crore were inaugurated. Under the Kalyana Karnataka Region Development Board (KKRDB) grants, Siddaramaiah laid foundation stones for 112 projects worth Rs 350.05 crore.

The government approved land acquisition for Phase III of the Krishna Upper Canal Project through farmer consent and would raise the height of the Almatti Dam, he noted.

"This decision will provide irrigation to over 15 lakh acres across Raichur, Yadgir, Kalaburagi and Koppal. We will invest over Rs 70,000 crores in the next three years," he said.

He also said "a Kalyana Karnataka Secretariat would be established in Kalaburagi", with a formal notification to be issued next week.

To reduce deaths due to cardiac ailments and providing timely treatment, he launched the Heart Line project, funded by the KKRDB at a cost of Rs 9.60 crore. *—Agencies*

>>>More on Page 2

> **While the rest of India was celebrating Independence on 15 August, 1947, this region was still not free. The atrocities of the Razakars had reached unbearable limits.... The sacrifices made by the countless heroes of the Hyderabad-Karnataka Liberation struggle are unforgettable.**
>
> —Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

CM Siddaramaiah in Kalaburagi, Wednesday ***PHOTO: X@SIDDARAMAIAH***

Remuneration for crop loss

CM said that the joint survey by revenue and agriculture departments will conclude in a week, after which the government will decide on the compensation to farmers.

Only Centre can decide on caste lists

CM said that the State government can only make recommendations to the Centre on listing castes as ST/SC. The final decision rests with the Centre, he said.

Centre not building AIIMS in Raichur

CM said that the State had written to the Centre and met Union Minister several times, requesting them to build AIIMS institution in Raichur, but the Union govt showed little interest.

In-laws burn woman to death for not bearing kids

DEEG, 17 SEPT

A married woman, Sarla, was allegedly killed by her in-laws in Kakra village, Deeg district, Rajasthan, due to her inability to bear children. The incident occurred when her in-laws attempted to burn her body in an effort to disguise the murder as an accidental household fire. Villagers, growing suspicious, alerted the police before cremation could take place.

Police arrived and seized Sarla's half-burnt body, which was then placed in the mortuary at Deeg Hospital. Police officer Mahendra Sharma confirmed the murder inquiry, stating, "Attempts were made to the body inside the house."

Sarla, originally from Raunija village and married to Ashok since 2005, did not have children. Her brother, Vikrant, alleged that Ashok frequently harassed and beat Sarla over her childlessness.

"We had no knowledge of this," he said, expressing shock upon discovering the events surrounding his sister's death. *—Salar News*

Sarla, who got married in 2005, was infertile, prompting her in-laws to burn her alive ***PHOTO: X***

'TREATED LIKE CATTLE'

56 Indians kept without food in Georgia

BENGALURU/ TBILISI, 17 SEPT

A woman tourist from India has alleged that a group of 56 Indian travellers were subjected to "most inhuman behaviour" by Georgian authorities while attempting to enter Georgia from Armenia.

Sharing her experience in an Instagram post, Dhruvee Patel said that despite carrying valid e-visas and documents, the tourists faced humiliation and prolonged detention at the Sadakhlo border from where they were due to enter Georgia.

According to her post, the group was "made to wait five plus hours in the freezing cold – no food, no toilet." She alleged that officials "confiscated passports for 2+ hrs with no communication" and forced them to sit on the footpath "like cattle."

- She alleged that officials "confiscated passports for 2+ hrs with no communication" and were "made to wait five plus hours in the freezing cold – no food, no toilet."

"This is how Georgia treats Indians. Shameful & unacceptable!" the woman wrote, tagging the official profiles of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Ministry of External Affairs, and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar."

The post drew mixed reactions from Netizens with some of them recalling their wonderful experience of the country.

"Thankfully, we visited Georgia in August 2024, when these kinds of issues were not there. It is a beautiful country with very nice people. I'm not sure what is happening at the government level," one comment said while there were others who said that racial profiling was a common thing in East European countries and Indians were often treated as 'criminals'. *—Salar News*

PM launches Rs 1,723 crore project on 75th birthday

DHAR, 17 SEPT

In a landmark event on Wednesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the 'Swasth Nari, Sashakt Parivar Abhiyaan' alongside the 8th Rashtriya Poshan Maah Campaign from Dhar district, Madhya Pradesh. He will also inaugurate the 'Aadi Seva Parv' to foster service-oriented activities in tribal areas.

A highlight of the day will be the laying of the foundation stone for India's first 'PM Mitra Park' in the village of Bhainsola, aimed at revitalising the state's textile industry and creating approximately 3,00,000 new jobs for the youth.

Meanwhile, Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched 17 projects and schemes of the Delhi government worth Rs 1,723 crore on Modi's birthday on Wednesday, with Chief Minister Rekha Gupta calling the Centre the "lifeline" of the national capital.

The projects and schemes included five new hospital blocks, 101 Ayushman Arogya Mandir clinics, 150 dialysis machines, the registration of 50,000 people under the old-age pension scheme. *—PTI*

>>>More on Pages 2,3, 5

Woman drowns in flash floods in Gadag

BELAGAVI, 17 SEPT

A woman was swept away and drowned due to flash floods in Gadag district on Tuesday. The incident occurred on Tuesday evening in the Ron taluk when she was travelling pillion on the bike with two others and heavy rain pushed the bike into a pond.

The two men with her were able to escape and promptly informed the police.

"Heavy water flow pushed the bike to the pond in which Basamma drowned," Rohan Jagadish, Gadag Superintendent of police said.

Inspector Banakar added that the water level in the pond where Basamma drowned was not more than four feet.

"The bike that also got washed away in the flow of the water was also recovered," Banakar said.

Based on the information of the hospital staff, Banakar said that Basamma, who was attached to the government health department, might have died due to cardiac arrest.

—Salar News

Villagers protest after woman dies in hospital

GAURIBIDANURU, 17 SEPT

Tension prevailed near the Government Mother and Child hospital in Gauribidanuru following the death of a lactating mother during the early hours of Wednesday. Villagers assembled near the Hospital and shouted slogans against Dr. Shwetha, who they alleged had shown negligence during the cesarean, resulting in her death. The deceased identified as Bhagyamma, 34, a resident of Pulaganahalli in Alipura GP of Gauribidanur, developed health issues, including heavy bleeding, hours after her delivery on Tuesday, and was rushed to Vani Vilas Hospital in the City. Despite efforts, Bhagyamma succumbed at around 3.00am on Wednesday. District Health Officer has formed a panel to determine the cause of death. ***—Salar News***

AIDSO protest against delay in hiring of faculty

MYSURU, 17 SEPT

Student Organisation of AIDSO on Wednesday accused the State government of inordinate delay in the appointment of guest faculty at the degree colleges and called for a boycott on 27 September. According to the statement, the District Secretary of AIDSO condemned the State for delaying the hiring of guest faculty in State's government colleges when private colleges had already started the classes two months ago, preparing for first semester exams. Thousands of students in over 20 districts lodged a strong protest against the delay in hiring. ***—Salar News***

Rolls-Royce opens largest capability centre in City

BENGALURU, 17 SEPT

Aerospace major Rolls-Royce on Wednesday said it has opened its newly expanded Global Capability and Innovation Centre in Bengaluru. The facility will house part of Rolls-Royce's global digital capabilities and enterprise services team, alongside engineering teams supporting Civil Aerospace and Defence businesses, further strengthening Rolls-Royce's capabilities in the country. The centre is positioned to become the largest capability hub for the company and will support key global corporate functions across its civil, defence and power systems businesse. The new facility was inaugurated by Karnataka Industries Minister MB Patil. ***—PTI***

The State government is currently mulling inclusion of the Kurubas, the community to which CM Siddaramaiah belongs, under the ST list ***PHOTO: X@SIDDARAMAIAH***

Centre decides caste lists, not State: CM

CM backs inclusion of Kurubas in ST list

KALABURAGI, 17 SEPT

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday said the decision to include any community under the Scheduled Tribes (ST) list rests with Centre and the State government can only send recommendations.

The State government is currently mulling inclusion of the Kurubas, the community to which Siddaramaiah belongs, under the ST list.

"This (move) was done during the previous government itself. The central government will decide. We (State) will only make recommendations," Siddaramaiah said in response to a question on members of the Valmiki community opposing the proposal.

Speaking to press in Kalaburagi, he said, "There is no need for anyone to oppose. If the community has to come under ST, they will be included. If not, they will not be."

Kurubas currently are listed as Other Backward Classes (OBC) category.

They are seen as a dominant OBC community in the state after the Lingayats and Vokkaligas.

To add any community to ST list, a recommendation has to be made by the state government to the Centre.

The State's Social and Educational Survey, popularly known as the 'caste census' will be conducted between September 22 and October 7 at an estimated cost of Rs 420 crore.

On the BJP delegation complaining to the Governor, regarding the caste census having at least 46 castes with dual identities (having Christian and Hindu caste name), the CM said, "Are they not citizens of this country? Are Christians and Muslims not citizens? Whatever people say their caste is--to the enumerators during the enumeration--it will be entered accordingly."

Highlighting that castes with dual identities like 'Kuruba Christian', 'Brahmin Christian', 'Vokkaliga Christian' among others, may lead to confusion and give opportunity for a large-scale religious conversion, the BJP on Tuesday urged the Governor to intervene and issue necessary instructions to the government. *—PTI*

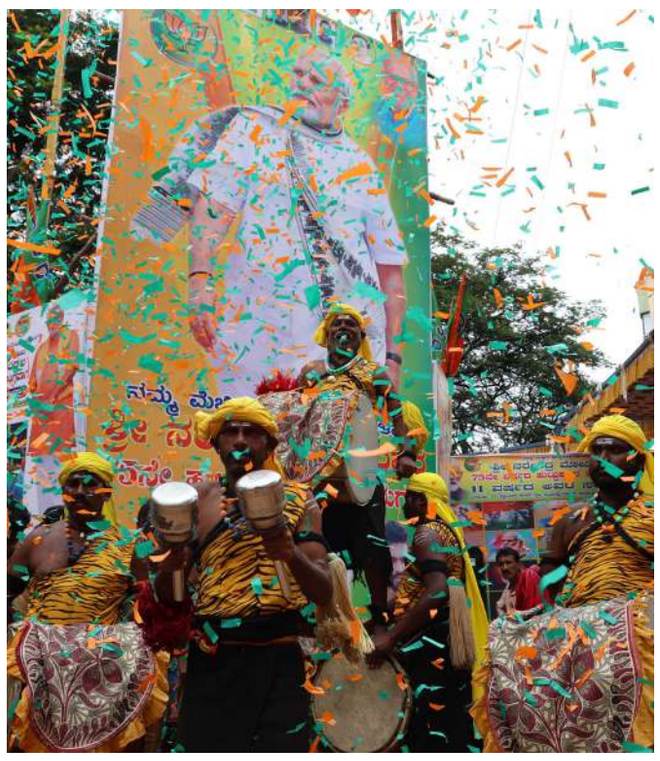
Among 5 OBC categories in State, who get an overall

32 PER CENT

reservation, Kurubas come under Category 2A which has a 15 per cent quota.

"The Kuruba community, which constitutes about 7 per cent of the population, is significantly lagging in education..... Previously, a recommendation was made to the central government to include the Kuruba community in the SC category. The central government sent it back. Therefore, a recommendation will be sent again with additional data and documents

—Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister



BJP workers and supporters celebrate the 75th birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi by performing folk artist's performances at Rajajinagar in Bengaluru, on Wednesday ***PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ASAD***

Modi shattered Cong's unity myth: Deve Gowda

BENGALURU, 17 SEPT

In a heartfelt message on Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 75th birthday, JDS supremo HD Deve Gowda commended the leader for dismantling the "carefully cultivated myth" that the Congress party alone could maintain national unity and stability.

In his letter, 92-year old Gowda remarked, "I wish you a very happy 75th birthday. May God be on your side always, and give you the strength to take our nation to greater heights." He credited Modi's 11 years in office with ensuring socio-economic stability and security, noting, "The people of India have acknowledged this at every turn and every election."

Gowda noted a significant change in national sentiment over the last decade, stating, "You have blown up this myth forever." He praised Modi for

showcasing India's civilizational strength, "This new confidence has caused a national resurgence that will play a big role in taking India to unimaginable heights in the near future."

He concluded with well-wishes for Modi's health, asserting, "May the lord almighty give you good health and ensure that you become a centenarian." *—PTI*

BJP asks ED to widen its net in MUDA case

MYSURU, 17 SEPT

Following the ED's arrest of former MUDA commissioner **Dinesh Kumar**, Mysuru MP Yaduveer Wadiyar and BJP MLA TS Srivatsa asked the ED to extend its net. They stated that there are others who are involved in the scam and should be probed.

"I demand that ED must investigate all the accused in the scam," Yaduveer said. He said that his party had been demanding a detailed probe into MUDA's "irregularities" from when the scandal surfaced.

Srivatsa added that the arrest of Kumar was insufficient. He demanded that all former MUDA commissioners.

"A lot of irregularities occurred regarding the allotment of sites during the 50:50 ratio scheme," he charged.

The MUDA case involved alleged irregularities in land allotted to Parvathi, wife of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah. The State government then constituted an internal probe to investigate the matter.

The Justice PN Desai Commission exonerated Siddaramaiah and his wife Parvathi, finding no illegality in the allotment of 14 plots by MUDA to Parvathi in exchange for 3.16 acres of her land at Kesare village in Mysuru, which the Authority had used to form a residential layout.

Similarly, the Supreme Court upheld a Karnataka High Court decision to quash ED proceedings against Parvathi and also quashed the ED summons issued to Urban Development Minister BS Suresh (Byrathi Suresh), who was not named as an accused, but was called for questioning by the agency. *—Salar News*

BJP ACCUSES CONG OF 'VOTE CHORI MAFIA'

BENGALURU, 17 SEPT

After the State High Court set aside the election of a Congress MLA, BJP leader R Ashoka on Wednesday accused the ruling party of running a "Vote Chori Mafia".

The attack came a day after the court nullified the election of Congress legislator KY Nanjegowda from Malur constituency in the May 2023 Assembly election, on petition filed by KS Manjunath Gowda, defeated BJP candidate.

The bench has directed the EC to recount the votes within four weeks and declare the result afresh. However, after the request on behalf of Nanjegowda, the court decided to put the order on hold for 30 days, to enable him to appeal before Supreme Court.

"Congress = Vote Chori Mafia. From Ballari to Malur, one pattern never changes - Rig the booth, steal the vote, murder democracy," Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly Ashoka, said in a post on X. "Rahul Gandhi does drama about Save Democracy... while Chief Siddaramaiah & Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar run the Vote Chori Mafia in Karnataka.... Congress' mask of morality is in tatters. Karnataka will soon show this Mafia the door!" *—PTI*

The SIT personnel have collected the bones and sent them for forensic examination ***PHOTO: PTI***

D'sthala case: Skeletons found near Banglegudda

MANGALURU, 17 SEPT

A Special Investigation Team (SIT) investigating the long-standing Dharmasthala case has reportedly uncovered skeletal remains during a search operation in the Banglegudda forest, near the Netravati bathing ghats in Dakshina Kannada district in the State on Wednesday.

According to officials, the remains were located in an area previously identified as a potential evidence site based on earlier witness testimonies.

The SIT personnel have collected the bones and sent them for forensic examination.

This development follows claims made by local leader Vitthal Gowda, the uncle of the deceased, Soujanya, who stated that he had observed "decomposed bodies or skeletal remains" in the same region during a previous inspection.

Soujanya, a 17-year-old college student, was allegedly raped and murdered on 9 October 2012, in Dharmasthala.

Authorities have yet to confirm whether the newly discovered remains correspond to the location identified by Gowda.

Search operations are ongoing in the dense Banglegudda forest area to determine if additional remains or crucial evidence can be found.

The SIT officials have indicated that the area may hold further leads related to the case, with detailed forensic results pending. *—PTI*

Bidar police use drone to seize Rs 8.12 lakh ganja from farmer

BIDAR, 17 SEPT

In a significant crackdown, Bidar district police detected ganja plants worth Rs 8.12 lakh using drone surveillance in Karanja (B) village, Aurad taluk, under the Chintaki Police Station's jurisdiction.

A farmer had secretly cultivated 46 ganja plants hidden among his cotton crops, intending to harvest and sell them illegally.

A farmer had secretly cultivated 46 ganja plants hidden among his cotton crops, intending to harvest and sell them illegally ***PHOTO: PTI***

District Superintendent of Police Pradeep Gunti, DCRB PSI Ambrish Vaghmore and Chintaki PSI Chandrashekar Nirne, led the operation after receiving reliable information. He said, "Farmers must not cultivate banned crops. We urge the public to report drug-related activities as we strive to make Bidar a drug-free district."

Meanwhile, the City Police have seized 22kg of ganja from a suspicious car bearing an Army sticker and arrested the driver from the Girinagar area of the City, said officials. Police also found Rs 2.80 lakh in cash, 88g of gold, and five mobile phones in the car.

Two people fled from the car, leaving behind the driver. When the car was searched, a sack full of ganja was found.

—Salar News with Agencies

Actor Darshan's counsel claims denial of facilities

BENGALURU, 17 SEPT

The ongoing controversy regarding facilities provided to Kannada actor Darshan Thoogudeepa, who is currently imprisoned in Parappana Agrahara Central Prison in the City linked to the Renukaswamy murder case, has once again escalated in court. His advocate, S Sunil Kumar, claimed that prison officials have failed to comply with a prior court order to provide minimum necessities, including a bed and pillow. "Despite a specific order of the court, the jail authorities have not provided even basic essentials such as a bed, blanket, plate, and a mug," Kumar stated, accusing them of contempt of court.

He further questioned the justification for keeping Darshan and other accused in quarantine for over a month. He also noted that only co-accused Pavithra Gowda was exempt from this treatment. Government pleader Sachin countered by asserting that Darshan's facilities aligned with jail regulations and that he was permitted routine outdoor walks. *—PTI*

Industry leaders urge govt mediation after BlackBuck's exit

BENGALURU, 17 SEPT

Industry leaders have urged the State government to intervene after trucking platform BlackBuck announced it would leave its Bellandur office on the Outer Ring Road (ORR), citing poor infrastructure and long commutes.

On Tuesday, BlackBuck Co-Founder and CEO Rajesh Yabaji said in a post on X: "ORR (Bellandur) has been our "office + home" for the last nine years. But it's now very-very hard to continue here. We have decided to move out."

Former Infosys CFO Mohandas Pai called it a "big failure" of governance and appealed to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Deputy CM DK Shivakumar, IT Minister Priyank Kharge and City officials to act.

"Minister DK Shivakumar please see, cos are moving out of ORR. Situation beyond hope. Please intervene," he said in a post on 'X' on Tuesday. *—PTI*

VIJAYAPURA HEIST

Armed men tie up SBI staff, rob Rs 20 crore

VIJAYAPURA, 17 SEPT

Three masked men armed with country-made pistols and knives allegedly robbed a nationalised bank in this district, making off with over Rs 20 crore in cash and gold ornaments, after tying up the staff, police said on Wednesday.

According to the police, the incident occurred around 6.30pm on Tuesday, when three masked men came to the bank under the pretext of opening a current account and threatened the manager, cashier, and other employees with pistols and knives. They tied up the bank manager, cashier, and a staff member and stole approximately 20kg of gold and Rs 1 crore in cash.

According to Vijaypura Superintendent of Police Laxman Nimbargi, the suspects wore military uniforms and used a Suzuki EVA vehicle with a fake number plate. Before escaping, the robbers took the CCTV cameras, footage and equipment linked to it.

After committing the offence, they moved towards Pandharpur in Maharashtra.

A case was registered based on the bank manager's complaint.

"Further investigation is

PHOTO: AI

underway and all efforts are being taken to nab the suspects," he added.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has directed the police to take all precautionary measures to prevent such incidents and activities.

"The car has been identified, I have given instructions to trace the accused at the earliest. I have spoken to Vijayapura SP over the phone. I have also instructed to ensure that officials are alert," he told reporters in City.

Asked about similar incidents in the region and involvement of robbers from other states, the CM said, "I have instructed police to take all precautionary measures to stop such incidents and activities."

—Salar News with Agencies

Pak brought to its knees: Modi

Modi said JeM commander admitted to India's attack on their hideouts

Women cheer as Prime Minister Narendra Modi launches the 'Swasth Nari, Sashakt Parivar' initiative in Dhar district in Madhya Pradesh **PHOTO: PTI**

DHAR, 17 SEPT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday said Indian soldiers brought Pakistan to its knees "in the blink of an eye" during Operation Sindoor.

He addressed a gathering after laying the foundation stone for the Pradhan Mantri Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Park in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh.

Modi also launched the 'Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar' and the 8th 'Rashtriya Poshan Maah' campaigns, aimed at improving women's health and promoting nutrition.

He referred to a viral video in which a Jaish-e-Mohamad (JeM) commander is heard explaining how the Indian armed forces entered their hideout and attacked them. He admitted that the family of Masood Azhar, the terror group's top commander, was "torn into pieces" in strikes on Bahawalpur.

Making a strong pitch for swadeshi goods, Modi urged citizens to ensure that whatever they buy or sell is made in India.

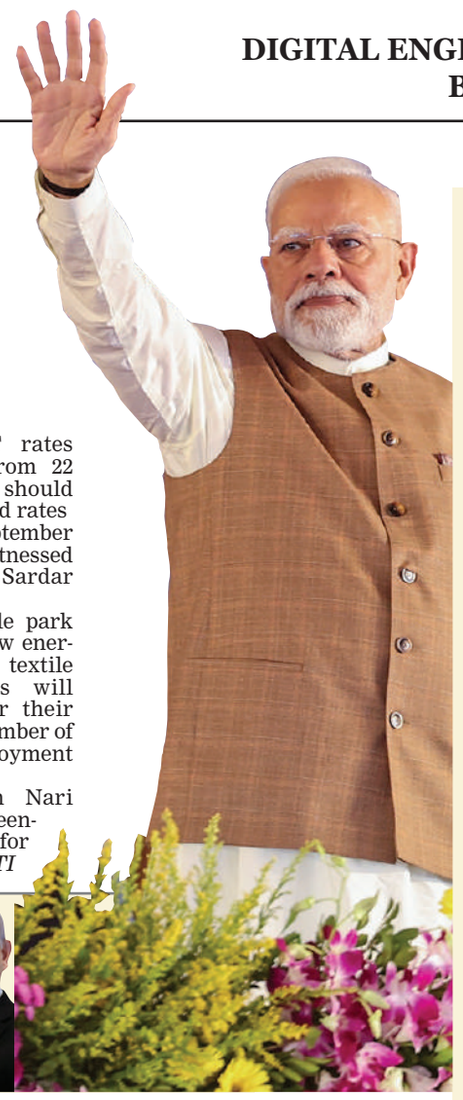
He said buying swadeshi keeps money within the country, prevents capital outflow, generates employment and contributes directly to national development.

With reduced GST rates coming into effect from 22 September, everyone should benefit from the revised rates

Modi said that on September 17, 1948, the nation witnessed the iron will of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

The integrated textile park in Dhar will infuse new energy into the country's textile industry as farmers will receive fair value for their produce and a large number of youth will gain employment opportunities, he said.

Under the 'Swasth Nari Sashakt Parivar', screenings will be conducted for conditions. *—PTI*



TO MODI, WITH LOVE

Dear Mr. Prime Minister, please accept my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of your 75th birthday. You have earned the high respect of your compatriots and enormous authority on the world stage

- Vladimir Putin, Russian

Happy 75th birthday to the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. His strength, his determination, and his ability to lead millions of people are a source of inspiration. With friendship and esteem, I wish him health and energy to continue.

- Giorgia Meloni, Italian Prime Minister

Prime Minister Modi, my good friend Narendra, I want to wish you a happy birthday. You've accomplished so much for India in your life, and we have together accomplished a great deal in the friendship between India and Israel

– Benjamin Netyanahu, Israeli Prime Minister

Delhi's healthcare gets major boost

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

On Prime Minister Narendra Modi's birthday, Delhi unveiled significant healthcare upgrades, including 101 Ayushman Arogya Mandir units, five new hospital blocks costing Rs 503.49 crore, and 150 dialysis machines across six hospitals. Key developments feature trauma and maternal health facilities, expanded inpatient and outpatient services, and dialysis units. *—PTI*

NGO eyes world record in blood donation

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

On Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 75th birthday, the Akhil Bhartiya Terapanth Yuvak Parishad, an NGO, organised a blood donation drive to collect 3 lakh units of blood in a day to set a new world record. Camps were set up at 7,000 locations in India. *—PTI*

E-auction of over 1,300 gifts of PM begins

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

More than 1,300 items gifted to Prime Minister Narendra Modi have been put up for an e-auction, including a stunning statue of Goddess Bhavani and a model of the Ayodhya Ram Temple. The auction, which began on 17 September, the Prime Minister's 75th birthday will run until 2 October.

As per the PM Mementos website, the statue of Goddess Bhavani has a base price of Rs 1,03,95,000, while the Ram Temple model starts at Rs 5.5 lakh. The auction also features memorabilia from India's para-athletes who participated in the 2024 Paris Paralympics, showcasing their "resilience, excellence and indomitable spirit despite their disabilities." *—PTI*

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta speaks during the launch of 'NAMo Sugamya Rath' and 'Sugamya Delhi Yatra' in New Delhi **PHOTO: PTI**

PM Modi launches Seva Parv

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has initiated a 15-day digital volunteering campaign called 'Seva Parv' on the NaMo app, honouring his lifelong dedication to service. The initiative, running until 2 October, brings to life a collection of interactive experiences on the NaMo app. It allows citizens to join hands in acts of service, tracking Modi's life and sharing wishes. *—PTI*

Union Minister for Minority Affairs Kiren Rijiju takes part in a cleanliness drive in New Delhi on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

Puducherry governor K.Kailshnathan pulls a golden chariot at Shri Siva Subramanya Swami Temple in Puducherry on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

Milk offering being made to Ganga in Varanashi in Uttar Pradesh to pray for Prime MInister Modi on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

Milk offerings made to Ganga for PM

VARANASI, 17 SEPT

A special 'dugdhabhishek' (milk offering) to the Ganga and prayers at the Kashi Vishvanath temple were held on the occasion of Prime Minister Narendra Modi' 75th birthday. A special Ganga aarti was conducted in the evening at Namo Ghat, while fruits were distributed in hospitals, orphanages and old-age homes earlier in the day. A cleanliness drive was inaugurated on the occasion, which will continue till 2 October.

Special ward-level cleanliness campaigns will be held at bus stands, railway stations, schools, Ramleela grounds and public places. Meanwhile, in Jaypur, the first village adopted by Modi under the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana in 2014, residents celebrated by garlanding his portrait and cutting a cake at the panchayat bhawan. *—PTI*

Outside mediation didn't pause Op Sindoor: Rajnath

HYDERABAD, 17 SEPT

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday virtually rejected US President Donald Trump's claims of intervening to stop the Indo-Pak conflict following Operation Sindoor, saying the action against terrorists was not suspended due to any third-party mediation. Speaking at the 'Hyderabad Liberation Day' celebrations here, he said 'Operation Sindoor' would resume if any terrorist attack took place in the future. Speaking about India's growing strength, he asserted that no one can challenge the country's sovereignty. Today's India is capable of directly confronting enemies.—*PTI*

Azam acquitted in property damage case

MORADABAD, 17 SEPT

Prominent Samajwadi Party leader Azam Khan has been acquitted by a special MP-MLA court in a 17-year-old case involving public property damage during a protest. The court decision was delivered on 16 September after Khan's defence presented seven witnesses compared to only one from the prosecution. The case stemmed from a 2008 incident near Chhajlet Police station, where Khan allegedly led a road blockade in response to police actions regarding his vehicle. The protest turned violent and electric polls were damaged. Despite having evaded surrender for several years, the court ultimately found insufficient evidence to support the charges against him, and his counsel stated Khan remains incarcerated in Sitapur jail despite the acquittal in the case by the court.—*PTI*

Delhi poll panel begins prep to rollout SIR

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

The CEO's office has requested people to go through 2002 voter list to verify their names **PHOTO: ANI**

The voters of Delhi will have to present an identity proof if their names do not appear in the voter list of 2002, as the poll panel begins preparations for the rollout of the SIR exercise in the national capital, the dates of which will be announced later.

According to an official statement, the Election Commission (EC) has decided to begin the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) across the country for the discharge of its constitutional mandate to protect the integrity of the electoral rolls.

The Delhi chief electoral officer's (CEO) office has also started preparations for a successful conduct of the exercise.Booth-level officers (BLOs) have been appointed in all Assembly constituencies.

All officers concerned -- district election officers, electoral registration officers, assistant electoral registration officers and BLOs -- have been imparted training, it added.

The CEO's office has requested people to go through the voter list of 2002 to verify their and their parents' names.

In cases where the name of an elector does not appear in the voter list of 2002 but his parents' names do, he will have to submit an identity proof, along with the enumeration form and an extract of the voter list of 2002 in respect of his parents, it has added.

The Delhi CEO's office has uploaded the voter list of the SIR held in 2002. Additionally, the present Assembly constituencies have been mapped with the constituencies existing in 2002, which is also available on the website.

The SIR of the voter list in Bihar -- the first since 2003 -- sparked a huge political row, with opposition alleging that it was depriving people of their right to vote. The EC has maintained that the SIR is to ensure that the names of all eligible citizens feature in the electoral rolls. The SIR reduced the number of registered voters in Bihar from 7.9 crore to 7.24 crore. *—PTI*

Over 50% of voters need not give document in SIR: EC

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

More than half the electorate in most of the states may not have to provide any document as they will be covered in the electoral roll of the last special intensive revision (SIR) held in their states, Election Commission officials said on Wednesday.

Most states had the last special intensive revision of the voters' list between 2002 and 2004. That year will be considered their cutoff date for the next SIR.

The Election Commission will soon decide on the date to roll out special intensive revision pan-India.

Chief electoral officers have been told to keep the electoral rolls of their states, published after the previous SIR, ready. Some state CEOs have already put up the voter list published after their last SIR on their websites.

4.96 crore voters, 60 per cent of the total electors in BIhar, who were listed in the 2003 special intensive revision need not submit any supporting document to establish their date. *—PTI*

16.4 lakh workers in Bihar to get Rs 802 cr

PATNA, 17 SEPT

- A web portal of the 'Mukhyamantri Pratigya Yojna' was launched on the occasion.

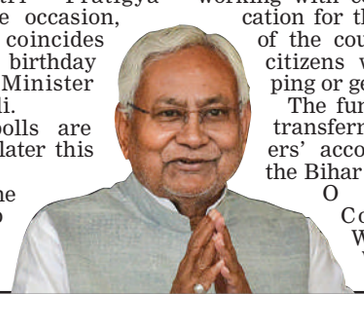
Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Wednesday announced the transfer of around Rs 802 crore to the accounts of 16.4 lakh construction workers under an annual scheme, on the occasion of Vishwakarma Puja.

The state government also launched a web portal of the 'Mukhyamantri Pratigya Yojna' on the occasion, which also coincides with the 75th birthday of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Assembly polls are due in Bihar later this year.

"Today is the day of worship of Lord Vishwakarma (Vishwakarma Puja), the divine architect of the universe, and it is also the birthday of PM Narendra Modi jee. The PM is tirelessly working with complete dedication for the upliftment of the country and its citizens without stopping or getting tired.

The funds are being transferred to workers' accounts under the Bihar Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare—*PTI*



'DEFAMATORY PUBLICATION'

HC asks Cong to remove PM, mom's AI video

PATNA, 17 SEPT

The Patna High Court on Wednesday directed the Congress to take off from its social media handles an AI-generated video depicting Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his late mother.

The court passed the order on a petition filed by advocate Vivekanand Singh and others, who had called the video a "defamatory publication" and violative of restraints placed on political parties.

In the petition, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, the Union government and the Election Commission were also named as respondents.

The court also issued notices to Facebook, Twitter and Google, directing them to file their reply by the next date of hearing.

The high court is likely to mention the next date in the order sheet, which would be uploaded on its website.

The petitioner had called the video on Prime Minister Modi and his late mother as violative of restraints placed on political parties **PHOTO: AI**

Targeting Modi, the Bihar Congress had last week posted the video on its X handle, with a prompt in Hindi, "Sahab ke sapno mein aayi maa. Dekhiye rochak samvaad. (Mother came in sahab's dream. Watch an interesting interaction between them.)

The video portrayed Modi's mother criticising him for his politics.

The BJP and its allies had lashed out at the Congress over the video, while protests erupted across the country.

The Congress maintained that no disrespect was shown to the PM or his mother.

"What is their objection? Just because a mother is trying to educate the son to do something right. Where is it disrespectful, neither to the mother, whom we respect dearly, nor to the son," Congress' media and publicity department head Pawan Khera had said defending the video. *—PTI*

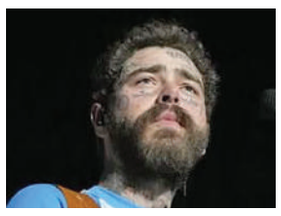


PHOTO: X

Post Malone to perform in Guwahati on 8 Dec

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

Global superstar Post Malone is set to perform his first-ever solo headline show in Northeast India, with a concert scheduled for 8 December at Khanapara Veterinary Ground in Guwahati, Assam. The event is produced by BookMyShow Live in collaboration with Live Nation and the Assam government. This performance marks Malone's debut stadium show in the region, following his appearance in Mumbai in 2022 for a charitable event. Naman Pugalia, Chief Business Officer – Live Events at BookMyShow, stated, "To bring him exclusively to Guwahati opens a powerful new chapter for live music in the Northeast." Tickets will be available from 12 September at 12pm on BookMyShow. *—PTI*

Farmers burning stubble must be arrested, says SC

Instead of burning, stubble can be re-purposed as biofuel: SC

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

Concerned over the usual spike in pollution levels in winter, the Supreme Court asked the Punjab government on Wednesday why some errant farmers should not be arrested for indulging in stubble burning, a key contributor to air pollution, to send across a stern message.

The court heard a suo-motu plea relating to filling up vacancies in the state pollution control boards of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan and Punjab.

The court asked these states, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) and the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) to fill up vacancies within three months.

Stubble burning is a practice in vogue among farmers to quickly clear their fields for the next sowing cycle.

The court said stubble, instead of being burnt, can be re-purposed as biofuel and insisted that the state must consider stricter punitive provisions if it is genuinely committed to environmental protection.

The counsel for Punjab government said that several steps had been taken and the number of stubble-burning incidents has decreased from 77,000 to 10,000 in recent years.

He said arresting small farmers, who till around one hectare of land, could disproportionately impact them and their dependents would suffer. Stubble burning is prohibited under the Environment Protection Act, which does not prescribe penalties and rather the CAQM Act provides for action against erring officials.

Senior advocate and amicus curiae Aparajita Singh said despite subsidies, equipment and repeated orders of the apex court since 2018, the ground situation has not improved substantialle. *—PTI*

SC reverses order on Haryana Village Commons

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

The Supreme Court has set aside its April 2022 decision directing that the village common lands in Haryana be returned to gram panchayats. The top court had held that the in respect to land taken from the proprietors, the management and control would vest with the panchayat. It upheld a Punjab and Haryana High Court ruling, which had held that land not earmarked for common purposes during consolidation would vest with proprietors, not the panchayat or the state. *—PTI*

BJP MP Anurag Thakur during a visit to a disaster-hit area after heavy rainfall in Mandi in Himachal Pradesh **PHOTO: PTI**

Rains leave 1,500 HP families homeless

SHIMLA, 17 SEPT

Monsoon fury in Himachal Pradesh has rendered more than 1,500 families homeless since its onset on 20 June as the state received 46 per cent rain more than the normal.

The Himalayan state witnessed 46 cloudbursts, 98 flash floods and 145 major landslides, while 417 people have died, of who 231 lost their lives in rain-related incidents and 181 in road accidents. About 477 people have suffered injuries, while 45 are still missing.

1,502 houses were fully damaged while 6,503 suffered partial damage as the state suffered losses to the tune of Rs 4582 crore so far.

The public works department was the worst hit with losses amounting to Rs 2803 crore, followed by the Jal Shakti department at Rs 1,405 crore.

Frequent natural disasters have made life in the hill state uncertain, and an uneasy calm prevails among the residents who are fighting to restore normalcy. On 16 September 655 roads, including stretches of three National Highways, were closed in the state.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said that his government was prioritising restoring road and power connectivity and repairing damaged infrastructure, as rehabilitation work picked up pace. *—PTI*

Vaishno Devi pilgrimage resumes in J&K

JAMMU, 17 SEPT

Amid chants of 'Jai Mata Di', the pilgrimage to Mata Vaishno Devi shrine atop Trikuta hills resumed in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district on Wednesday, after a suspension of 22 days due to a devastating landslide that claimed 34 lives and injured 20. The yatra began at 6am from both the routes leading to the shrine after a temporary suspension necessitated by inclement weather conditions. *—PTI*

Elderly man killed over food dispute in Uttar Pradesh

HATHRAS, 17 SEPT

A man has been arrested for allegedly murdering a 75-year-old villager in Uttar Pradesh's Hathras district following a dispute over food, officials reported on Wednesday. The body of Dorilal Upadhyay was discovered in a field in Kevalgarhi village on 13 September, displaying severe injuries. His son, Hariom, filed a complaint that led to the registration of a case. Senior police officials visited the scene with a forensic team, prompting the formation of multiple investigative teams. On Tuesday, Kishanpal Kashyap, known as Kissu, was apprehended near Nagla Bhus. Police recovered the murder weapon, a spear-like object, and revealed that Kissu had a longstanding relationship with the victim, guarding his fields in exchange for food. *—PTI*

SC CANCELS BAIL TO CHHOTA RAJAN IN 2001 MURDER

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

The Supreme Court on Wednesday cancelled the bail granted to gangster Chhota Rajan in the 2001 murder case of hotelier Jaya Shetty in Mumbai.

The court allowed the CBI's appeal challenging a Bombay High Court order, suspending the life sentence of Rajan and granted him bail.

Rajan remained absconding for 27 years and was convicted in four cases.

Rajan's counsel argued it was a case of no evidence. Of the 71 cases, the CBI did not find any material against him in 47 cases.

After his counsel said Rajan was acquitted in several cases, the court said the acquittals were due to the reason that witnesses did not come forward. The court noted he was serving sentence for the murder of veteran crime reporter J Dey.

In 2024, a special court convicted Rajan in the hotelier's murder case and sentenced him to life imprisonment. He later approached the high court. *—PTI*

Govt examines claims of arms struggle suspension by Maoists

RAIPUR, 17 SEPT

The outlawed CPI (Maoist) has announced a temporary suspension of its armed struggle to facilitate peace talks, but has asked the government to declare a one-month 'ceasefire' and halt security operations to initiate the process.

The Chhattisgarh government said it was verifying the authenticity of the statement, which surfaced on social media on

The rebels appealed to the government to share their decision on the issue via the internet and government news media, including radio.

The two-page statement, dated 15 August, was issued in the name of Abhay, a spokesperson of the central committee of Maoists, and came nearly four months after the killing of Nambala Keshav Rao alias Basavaraju, general secretary of the Communist Party of India (Maoist), in an encounter with security forces in Chhattisgarh's Bastar region.

Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma said the best way for Maoists is to surrender and avail rehabilitation benefits.

The Maoists had earlier proposed a ceasefire to the government. However, the Centre intensified its operations against them **PHOTO: PTI**

The term 'ceasefire' is highly objectionable as there is no war-like situation that requires one, he said.

The Maoists had proposed a ceasefire to the government earlier.

However, the central government intensified its operations, they said. *—PTI*

Naxalites kill man in Chhattisgarh

BIJAPUR, 17 SEPT

Naxalites hacked a man to death in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district, suspecting him of being a police informer. A group of Naxalites barged into Dashru Ram Oyam's house on 16 September, dragged him outside and killed him with axes.

The police have launched search operation in the area to track down the killers. *—PTI*

HC DISMISSES PLEA AGAINST 'JOLLY LLB 3'

MUMBAI, 17 SEPT

The Bombay High Court on Wednesday dismissed a plea against Akshay Kumar and Arshad Warsi's courtroom drama "Jolly LLB 3" alleging mockery of judges and lawyers, noting the court was used to such mockery.

"Don't worry about us," the HC said.

The petition filed by the Association for Aiding Justice through advocate Chandrakant Gaikwad sought a stay on the release of the movie and also deletion of the song, 'Bhai Vakeel Hai', claiming it to be derogatory towards the legal profession.

The petitioner's lawyer, Dipesh Siroya, said the movie and song make a mockery of not just lawyers but also judges, as they are referred to as "mamu", a slang, which was derogatory and insulting.

The court appeared amused and said it was not worried about the same.

The filmmakers informed the bench that a similar plea against the movie was filed before the Allahabad High Court, and the same was dismissed.

The movie will release on 19 September. *—PTI*

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah during an inspection of the restoration work on NH-44 in Udhampur on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

NATIONAL HIGHWAY IN J&K REOPENS

SRINAGAR, 17 SEPT

The Srinagar-Jammu national highway was thrown open for heavy vehicles on Wednesday after three weeks, clearing the way for hundreds of fruit-laden trucks to proceed towards their destinations across the country.

The 270 km-long Jammu-Srinagar National Highway (NH44) was reopened last week, but only for light motor vehicles.

The stranded vehicles along the highway and those waiting at the fruit mandis will be cleared on priority basis.

The drivers were asked to follow the traffic advisory and avoid overtaking along the highway.

The highway suffered heavy damages due to incessant rains and flash floods last month. Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday visited Kalaban village in Poonch to assess the damage caused by land subsidence in the border areas. *—PTI*

'Exact defamatory content against AEL not shown'

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

The counsel for journalist Paranjoy Guha Thakurta argued before a Delhi court on Wednesday that the exact defamatory content published by him against Adani Enterprises Limited (AEL) was not shown.

District Judge Rakesh Kumar Singh was hearing Thakurta's appeal against a civil court's 6 September interim order restraining him from publishing or circulating allegedly unverified and defamatory content against AEL.

The order had also directed the 10 defendants, including Thakurta, to take down contentious material already published on various platforms. *—PTI*

BMW accident: Accused's judicial custody extended

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

A Delhi court on Wednesday extended till September 27 the judicial custody of the woman who drove the BMW car involved in a crash that left a senior finance ministry official dead and his wife injured in Dhaula Kuan here.

The court also issued notice on a plea by the accused seeking preservation of the accident's CCTV footage. The plea will be heard on Thursday.

It also heard on her bail plea. Gaganpreet Kaur, 38, was remanded to two days of judicial custody after being arrested on charges of culpable homicide not amounting to murder and other offences. Deputy secretary in the Department of Economic Affairs, Navjot Singh, was killed in the accident. *—PTI*

Brother, his wife kill man, pass it off as accident

NAGPUR, 17 SEPT

A man and his wife have been arrested in connection with the suspected murder of his brother, whose death was initially passed off as an accident. The 40-year-old victim was discovered dead in the bathroom of his home at Eros Society in Shiv Nagar on 2 September. The family claimed he had fallen and sustained a head injury, but a post-mortem revealed severe head injuries consistent with assault, according to an official from Mankapur police station. "There was tension among family members due to the deceased's drinking habits," the official stated. Following the findings, the police arrested the brother and sister-in-law on Tuesday, and the investigation is ongoing. *—PTI*

IMA doctors threaten to go on strike in M'rashtra

MUMBAI, 17 SEPT

The Indian Medical Association's Maharashtra chapter has threatened to go on a 24-hour strike from 18 September to protest the government's decision to allow registration of homoeopathic doctors, who have completed a certificate course in modern pharmacology. Nearly 1.8 lakh allopathic doctors across the state will take part in the strike. Earlier the state government directed the Maharashtra Medical Council to register homoeopaths who had completed the one-year Certificate Course in Modern Pharmacology to allow them to prescribe allopathic medicines to patients in select cases. A fresh government resolution (GR) was issued in this regard on September 5, upsetting allopathic practitioners. However, emergency medical services will remain operational in the state's hospitals. *—PTI*

NEET aspirant murder: One suspect arrested

GORAKHPUR, 17 SEPT

In a significant development regarding the murder of 20-year-old NEET aspirant Deepak Gupta, allegedly by cattle smugglers, the Uttar Pradesh Police have arrested one suspect following a shootout on 17 September 2025.

The police's additional director general (ADG) law and order, Amitabh Yash, visited the crime scene at Jungle Dhooshan Chauraha, meeting Gupta's family and promising to submit a comprehensive report to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

"We will take the toughest possible action against the culprits," Yash assured after holding a high-level meeting with local police officials. Tensions escalated in Mauachapi village following

Deepak Gupta family wants death penalty for the accused **PHOTO: PTI**

Deepak's violent death, where he intervened to stop cattle smugglers from raiding his father's furniture shop. Villagers clashed with police during protests, prompting extensive security measures and a departmental inquiry into police negligence.

The grieving family has demanded Rs 1 crore in compensation, a government job, and the death penalty for those responsible. *—PTI*

GOLDY BRAR INVOLVED?

2 accused of shooting at Disha Patani's home killed

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

Two active members of the Rohit Godara-Goldy Brar gang, allegedly involved in firing outside Bollywood actress Disha Patani's residence in Bareilly, were shot dead in an encounter near Tronica City in Ghaziabad on Wednesday.

The encounter was carried out in a joint operation by Delhi police special cell, Uttar Pradesh special task force and Haryana special task force.

The deceased were identified as Ravinder, resident of Haryana's Rohtak and Arun from Haryana's Sonipat.

A police personnel also sustained injuries during the encounter.

Senior officers said further investigation is underway to trace other gang members who remain absconding. Unidentified assailants had fired multiple rounds outside Patani's Bareilly residence on 12 September.

A case was registered, and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directed immediate action in the matter, reiterating the state government's zero-tolerance policy towards crime.

Bollywood actress Disha Patani, The deceased were identified as Ravinder and Arun **PHOTO: PTI**

The police examined CCTV footage, gathered intelligence inputs, and matched records from neighbouring states, leading to the identification of the shooters, who had been absconding.

Earlier, the officials said that a joint team of the STF's Noida unit and Delhi Police intercepted the duo in Tronica City, Ghaziabad. In the ensuing exchange of fire, both accused sustained serious injuries and were rushed to the hospital for treatment.

The police confirmed that both Ravinder and Arun are active members of the Rohit Godara-Goldy Brar gang. Ravindra has a criminal history and has been involved in several previous cases.

A Glock and a Zigana pistol, along with a large quantity of cartridges, were recovered from the spot. *—PTI*

1ST WOMAN MEXICAN PREZ WELCOMES I-DAY

President Claudia Sheinbaum shouts from the balcony of the National Palace to kick off Independence Day celebrations at Mexico City's main square on Monday night. She became the first woman to preside over the celebrations in 215 years, with a message that she won't accept foreign intervention, a significant statement as she negotiates pressure from the United States ***PHOTO: AP***

India & EU near trade deal amid global turmoil

Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal met European Union Commissioner for Trade and Economic Security Maros Sefcovic, European Union Commissioner for Agriculture and Food, Christophe Hansen ***PHOTO: PTI***

A free trade agreement between the EU and India seems to be nearing the finish line. With the uncertainty over US tariffs, experts say both stand to gain from concluding the deal by the end of the year.

India and the European Union (EU) appear to be firmly on track to meet their year-end deadline to conclude free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations.

The talks are progressing against the backdrop of the pressure being exerted by US tariffs. Washington's approach under President Donald Trump has signalled a shift in the international order, encouraging the EU and India to cement reliable alliances and stable trade partnerships.

"We are now maximising our efforts to finalise negotiations by the end of the year," said European Trade Commissioner Maros Sefcovic, who was on a visit to India last week.

Indian Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal was similarly optimistic: "India and the EU complement each other and offer great opportunities on both sides."

After constructive talks with Goyal, Commissioner for Agriculture and Food Christophe Hansen stressed the commitment to secure "a balanced EU-India FTA that delivers for people, farmers and businesses on both sides," highlighting agriculture's central role in the negotiations.

Although the talks appear to be moving toward the finish line, Gulshan Sachdeva, an EU expert from Jawaharlal Nehru University, remains cautious.

"While statements from both sides reflect growing optimism, the India-EU trade deal is not done until it is truly done," Sachdeva told DW.

Negotiations on the FTA between India and the EU resumed in 2022, nearly a decade after initial attempts were suspended in 2013. In the past two years, there have been 13 rounds of talks with the 14th scheduled to take place in Brussels between 6-10 October.

Strategic relationship between India and EU?

For India, clinching this FTA means tariff-free entry for key exports, reducing dependency on volatile US markets and enhancing its stature as Europe's primary Asian partner. And for the EU, sealing the deal diversifies supply chains, secures agricultural and tech trade and strengthens its geopolitical leverage in the Indo-Pacific.

Experts point out that the timing of the negotiations has raised the stakes, especially with India being hit by US protectionism and needing new, robust export pathways.

The US has imposed a 50 per cent tariff on goods from India, which includes a 25 per cent penalty for its continued purchases of Russian oil.

It is estimated that the current tariffs could affect roughly half of India's nearly $87 billion (₹74.7 billion) worth of annual exports to the US.

Anil Wadhwa, a former Indian diplomat, told DW that Trump's tariffs have created unpredictability and unreliability in the India-US trade partnership and has eroded trust, creating a chasm which will take a long time to fill.

Sense of urgency to seal the FTA deal

Ummu Salma Bava, chairperson and Jean Monnet Chair at the Centre for European Studies in Jawaharlal Nehru University, told DW that the visit by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in February underlined a sense of urgency.

Von der Leyen said in her speech then that it was time to take India and the EU's partnership "to the next level" for their security, prosperity and "the common global challenges that we face."

German Foreign Minister Johann Wadephul's visit this month and pointed to an unprecedented level of political engagement between the two sides, thanks to Trump.

EU is India's 2nd largest trading partner

According to the European Commission, the EU is currently India's second-largest trading partner, with trade in goods worth ₹120 billion last year, or 11.5% of India's total trade. Sticking points for India and EU

However, negotiations between India and the EU "remain challenging," as they are "tough bargainers," according to Sachdeva.

The EU is seeking tariff reductions on vehicles, wine, spirits and dairy products, whereas India is focused on securing expanded market access for its textiles, pharmaceuticals, steel and petroleum products.

Former diplomat Wadhwa noted that one sticking point is the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) — a new carbon tariff system that requires importers to pay for the carbon emissions generated in producing certain goods like steel, fertilisers, aluminium and electricity brought into the EU.

Mohan Kumar, a former Indian envoy to France, explained that both the EU and India are trying to mitigate the geopolitical risks arising from Trump's tariffs and transactional approach to foreign policy.

The US leader upped the ante again this month, telling the EU to impose 100 per cent tariffs on India as well as China as part of Trump's so far unsuccessful attempts to pressure Russian President Vladimir Putin to end the war in Ukraine. *—DW NEWS*

SALAR سالار

It's 'case closed' for many crime cases in Don's DC

More than 50 people have faced federal charges in Washington, DC, since President Donald Trump's emergency law-and-order surge began last month. Already, prosecutors have dropped at least 11 of those cases, an unusually high collapse rate that judges say is wasting court resources.

The dismissals highlight the risks of Trump's emergency surge strategy: an unprecedented flood of arrests that has produced headline-grabbing numbers but faltered under judicial scrutiny, with some of the most serious cases — from assaults on federal agents to gun charges — unravelling before they ever reach trial.

- More than 50 people have faced federal charges in Washington, DC, since President Donald Trump's emergency law-and-order surge began last month.

On Tuesday, US Magistrate Judge Matthew Sharbaugh dismissed two felony assault cases at the request of US Attorney Jeanine Pirro's office. He delivered a blunt warning from the bench as he questioned whether prosecutors are making charging decisions before cases are properly investigated and vetted.

"That's not the way it's supposed to work, and it has real-world consequences," Sharbaugh said. "This is becoming a real concern for the court just given the sheer numbers."

Judges aren't the only ones pushing back. Grand juries have refused to return indictments at least eight times in six separate cases, an extraordinarily rare rebuke that underscores scepticism about the strength of the evidence in surge prosecutions.

Trump claims his emergency 30-day deployment of federal agents and National Guard members is making the streets safer for District of Columbia residents.

One of the cases Sharbaugh dismissed involved Scott Pichon, accused of spitting on two members of the South Carolina Army National Guard outside Union Station on August 22. Prosecutors dropped the felony assault count and instead charged him with misdemeanours in DC Superior Court, which handles local criminal matters.

The other case was against Paul Nguyen, accused of assaulting a federal agent who tried to break up a street fight on August 23. Prosecutors abandoned that felony entirely, and Nguyen isn't facing any new charges.

Nguyen, who appeared in court wearing a sling, said his arm was broken during his arrest and that he spent five nights in jail before being released.

"It was the scariest experience of my life," he told reporters.

During separate hearings, Sharbaugh has asked prosecutors to explain why they were abandoning the felony charges against the two men. Prosecutors in both cases said the decision to drop the charges was made after reviewing the evidence.

They didn't specify any particular problems with the evidence.

The White House says over 2,000 people have been arrested since the federal intervention started on August 7. At least 52 people arrested on surge-related offences have been charged in district court, according to an Associated Press review of court records. Many more surge cases have been filed in Superior Court.

"US Attorney Pirro and her office, in charging over 1,700 cases, follow the evidence wherever it leads, constantly evaluating each case as it develops to rigorously follow the law and to bring swift justice — including a dismissal when it is in the interest of justice," office spokesperson Tim Lauer said in a statement.

Sharbaugh, who was appointed last October, is one of four magistrate judges presiding over initial court appearances and detention hearings for people charged with surge-related offences in district court.

Earlier this month, Magistrate Judge Zia Faruqui said leaders of Pirro's office have tarnished its reputation with how they are handling the deluge of cases.

He said Pirro's office is routinely bringing cases that don't belong in federal court and needlessly keeping people in jail for days while they evaluate charges.

Pirro, a former Fox News host who was appointed by Trump in May, responded by accusing Faruqui, a former federal prosecutor, of allowing his personal politics to cloud his judicial judgment. She also criticised grand juries that separately refused to indict two people who were charged last month with threatening to kill Trump.

"The system here is broken on many levels," Pirro said in a statement *—PTI*

Many have faced federal charges in Washington, DC, since President Donald Trump's emergency law-and-order surge began last month ***PHOTO: FREEPIK***

LETTERS

write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Childhood streets to national stage: PM's hometown celebrates

Surat residents celebrated PM Modi's 75th birthday with a massive portrait and tricolour created on fabric ***PHOTO: SURATUPDATESOFFICIAL***

Vadnagar, the hometown of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, marked his 75th birthday with spirited celebrations, with his cousins living there adding a personal touch with warm wishes.

People of Vadnagar, a small town in Gujarat's Mehsana district, organised blood donation and eye check-up camps, prayers at the famous Hatkeshwar Mahadev temple, and a cleanliness campaign.

"A blood donation camp was held on Tuesday. PM Modi's elder brother Somabhai Modi organised an eye check-up health camp on Wednesday morning," Vadnagar BJP unit office-bearer Bhavesh Patel told PTI.

"A special pooja was held at 7.30 am at the Hatkeshwar Mahadev temple. A havan (fire rituals) will be held at 4 pm and sweets will be distributed," he said.

A cleanliness drive was also held in the town after 9.30 am, he added.

"We have also organised a grand Gujarati folk music (daiyro) programme in the evening for the people of Vadnagar in which famous folk artists like Rajbha Gadhvi and Osman Mir will perform," the leader said.

While PM Modi left his hometown Vadnagar to pursue his political dreams long ago, two of his cousins - Bharatbhai Modi (65) and Ashokbhai Modi (61) - still live in Vadnagar.

Both of them are sons of late Narsinhdas Modi, younger brother of the PM's father, Damodardas Modi.

While Bharatbhai runs a grocery shop in a small rented premises, Ashokbhai sells religious and seasonal articles from his modest 4X2 feet shop and earns nearly Rs 5,000 per month.

Ashokbhai has spent his entire life at Vadnagar, while Bharatbhai returned here and opened the rented shop four years ago after retiring from a private job.

Almost everyone in the town knows both of them are PM Modi's cousins, but they have not met him for decades and never tried to "encash" their relationship.

"We are all proud that a person like Narendrabhai Modi is born in the Modi family. I extend warm birthday wishes to him. I pray that he achieves more success and takes the country ahead. He is working hard to make India a vishwaguru, and we all are with him in this endeavour," Bharatbhai told PTI.

"Though almost everyone in Vadnagar knows that I am the PM's cousin, I never tried to capitalise on the relationship in any manner. I believe that everyone should write their destiny. If traffic police stop my bike, I humbly pay the fine instead of trying to influence the police by revealing my identity," he said.

Ashokbhai also said he never sought any help from PM Modi despite his modest earnings.

"I wish a very happy birthday to Narendrabhai. May God fulfil all his wishes. Though I earn only Rs 5,000 every month, I never thought of asking Modi to help me in any manner," he said.

The PM's childhood friend from Vadnagar and classmate, Dashrathbhai Patel, said Modi dreamt of becoming the chief minister of Gujarat way back in 1969, more than three decades before he finally assumed the top office in 2001.

Referring to the prime minister's humble beginnings, he recalled how Modi, while still in school, would go from one compartment to another to sell tea to train passengers at Vadnagar railway station, where his father had a tea stall.

"Modi and I studied together, right from primary school in Vadnagar to college in Visnagar (in Mehsana district). We used to attend RSS shakhas (gatherings of swayamsevaks) together. Modi and his circle of friends once visited my farm, and we all enjoyed 'undhiyu', a delicacy from Surat. We also took part in school plays," he recollected.

"In 1969, Modi and I were walking past a small and dilapidated memorial of twin sisters and singers, Tana and Riri, in Vadnagar (PM's hometown). At that time, Modi told me he will restore the memorial after becoming chief minister. He kept that dream alive for many years. When he finally became CM (in 2001), he kept his promise and ordered the memorial's restoration," he said.

Dashrathbhai said his father used to run a shop at Vadnagar railway station, where Modi's father had a tea stall.

In the last few years, the central and state governments have revamped the birthplace of PM Modi. In 2021, Modi inaugurated the revamped Vadnagar railway station, where he had sold tea during his childhood.

As Vadnagar station is a part of the heritage circuit, the tourism ministry spent Rs 8.5 crore to give a heritage look to the existing building and its entry gate.

A heritage school, now known as 'Prerna School', in Vadnagar, where Modi had his initial education, underwent a complete renovation and was inaugurated in January this year by Union Home Minister Amit Shah.

An Archaeological Experiential Museum, which highlights Vadnagar's rich history, a cutting-edge sports complex and the redeveloped Sharmishtha lake are among the key development projects the town has witnessed during recent years.

At present, a multi-modal transportation hub and public plaza is being developed opposite the Vadnagar railway station. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

California varsity sues Trump administration

SAN FRANCISCO, 17 SEPT

A coalition of University of California (UC) students, faculty, staff, and unions has sued the Trump administration, alleging violations of civil rights laws. This comes after the administration fined UCLA $1.2 billion and froze its research funding over alleged antisemitism. The lawsuit claims that proposed settlements included invasive demands such as access to personal data and banning overnight demonstrations. Stett Holbrook, a UC spokesperson, remarked that funding cuts threaten research and healthcare. UC President James Milliken emphasised the long-term impact, noting the system receives $17 billion annually in federal support. The administration's actions have sparked investigations into diversity initiatives, affecting elite colleges like Harvard, Columbia. *—PTI*

S American bloc inks deal with 4 European nations

RIO DE JANEIRO, 17 SEPT

The Mercosur bloc of South America has signed a free trade agreement with Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland, aiming to deepen ties amid global trade uncertainties. The deal, finalised in Rio de Janeiro by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay, will create a free trade zone for nearly 300 million people and a combined GDP exceeding $4.3 trillion. The agreement, which covers goods, services, investment, and intellectual property rights, promises benefits such as lower prices for Swiss chocolate and Norwegian cod in South America and cheaper beef in Europe. Both sides will need to ratify the deal for it to take effect, following 14 rounds of negotiations since June 2017. *—PTI*

Lab reports say Navalny was poisoned: Widow

MOSCOW, 17 SEPT

The widow of Alexei Navalny said Wednesday that two independent labs have found that her husband was poisoned shortly before his death in a Russian prison. Navalny, who crusaded against official corruption and staged massive anti-Kremlin protests as President Vladimir Putin's fiercest foe, died in the Arctic penal colony in February 2024. He was serving a 19-year sentence that he believed to be politically motivated. Authorities said that the politician became ill after a walk but have otherwise given few details on his death. He was 47. In a video, Yulia Navalnaya said that biological samples from Navalny's body had been taken out of Russia and tested abroad. *—PTI*

Iran executes man accused of spying for Israel

DUBAI, 17 SEPT

Iran announced the execution of Babak Shahazi, accused of spying for Israel, a claim disputed by activists who allege he was tortured into a false confession. Shahbazi was said to have sold sensitive information about Iranian security installations. Activists contend that his arrest stemmed from a letter he wrote to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, offering assistance against Russia. Reports indicate that Iran has hanged eight individuals for espionage since renewing hostilities with Israel, raising concerns of a potential wave of executions. The Iranian judiciary did not elaborate on the execution method, though hanging is customary for condemned prisoners. Shahbazi's situation highlights a climate of repression amidst ongoing military tensions. *—PTI*

Britain's Prince William and wife Kate, Princess of Wales, receive President Donald Trump and first lady Melania Trump at Windsor Castle in Windsor, England, on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

Trump in UK for historic 2nd visit

No world leader has had a 2nd UK state visit

WINDSOR, 17 SEPT

US President Donald Trump arrived at Windsor Castle on Wednesday, kicking off a two-day state visit to Britain as the guest of King Charles III. The President's Marine One helicopter landed in the private Walled Garden at Windsor estate.

Prince William and his wife Catherine were on hand to meet the President and first lady Melania Trump, walking them over to be greeted by the king and Queen Camilla. It is a day of royal pageantry on his unprecedented second state visit to Britain.

It's a spectacle with a purpose: to bolster ties with a world leader known for a love of bling at a time when his America First policies are putting pressure on trade and security arrangements globally.

The backdrop for day one is Windsor Castle, an almost 1,000-year-old royal residence.

Melania and Donald Trump with King Charles and Queen Camilla **PHOTO: PTI**

UK inflation was at 3.8% as food prices rose for 5th straight month in Aug

Trump will talk with Prime Minister Keir Starmer on Thursday, who will tout a new UK-US technology deal. The British government hopes the deal, and billions in investment from US tech firms, will help show that the trans-Atlantic bond remains strong despite differences over Ukraine, Middle East, NATO's future.

Starmer also hopes to avoid awkward questions about Jeffrey Epstein. Days before the state visit, Starmer fired Britain's ambassador to the US, Peter Mandelson, over the envoy's past friendship with the convicted sex offender. On Tuesday, the campaign group Led By Donkeys projected an image of Trump and Epstein on a tower at Windsor Castle. Cops arrested four people. *—PTI*

Now, Microsoft to invest $30B in UK

LONDON, 17 SEPT

Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella said on Wednesday that the American tech giant is "doubling down" on investments in Britain as Trump began his State Visit with the announcement of a US-UK Tech Prosperity Deal, focused on developing fast-growing technologies such as AI, quantum, and nuclear.

"That is why we are doubling down on our investment in the UK, investing more than 30 billion dollars over four years, including building the country's largest supercomputer," Nadella, the Indian-American Microsoft chief, said in an official statement.

Besides Microsoft, NVIDIA, Google, OpenAI, and CoreWeave are among the American tech majors to have committed a combined 31 billion pounds to boost the UK's artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure, from data centres to computer chips.

Meanwhile, Trump formally extended the deadline to keep the social media app TikTok available in the US until 16 December. *—PTI*

'RFK Jr forced me to make false vaccine recommendations'

Fired Centers for Disease Control and Prevention director Susan Monarez will tell senators that Health Secretary Robert F Kennedy Jr pressured her to endorse new vaccine recommendations before seeing scientific evidence. She claims Kennedy gave her an ultimatum to "pre-approve" new vaccines.

As Gaza burns, thousands of Palestinians flee

JERUSALEM, 17 SEPT

- Palestinians streamed out of the city — some by car, others on foot. Israel opened another corridor south of Gaza City for two days to allow more people to evacuate

Israeli troops and tanks were pushing deeper into Gaza City on Wednesday, the second day of a ground offensive that was widely condemned internationally, as Palestinians fled the devastated area en masse.

Palestinians streamed out of the city — some by car, others on foot. Israel opened another corridor south of Gaza City for two days beginning Wednesday to allow more people to evacuate.

Israel's military said that air force and artillery units had struck the city over 150 times in the last few days, ahead of ground troops moving in. The strikes have toppled high-rise towers in areas densely populated by tent camps where thousands of Palestinians are sheltering.

Overnight strikes killed at least 16 people, including women and children, hospital officials reported. The death count in Gaza is nearing 65,000 Palestinians since 7 October, according to health officials in the enclave.

More than half of the Palestinians killed in overnight Israeli strikes were in famine-stricken Gaza City, including a child and his mother who died in their apartment in the Shati refugee camp, while separate strikes killed a pregnant woman, and two parents and their child.

The Gaza Health Ministry, meanwhile, said that multiple Israeli strikes hit the Rantisi Hospital for children in Gaza City on Tuesday night. *—PTI*

Displaced Palestinians flee northern Gaza along the coastal road toward the south **PHOTO: PTI**

GENZ REVOLT

Nepal marks national day of mourning

KATHMANDU, 17 SEPT

All government offices and educational institutions remained closed across Nepal on Wednesday as the country observes "national day of mourning" in honour of those killed during Gen Z protests.

"In memory of those who died during the protests organised by the Gen Z generation on 8 and 9 Sept, Nepal has decided to observe a national day of mourning on Wednesday, 17 September," said a statement issued by the Home Ministry on Tuesday.

All Nepali embassies and missions abroad were closed, with the national flag being flown at half-mast.

On Sunday, Prime Minister Sushila Karki had announced that those killed during the Gen Z protest would be declared "martyrs".

Meanwhile, life has returned to normal in Kathmandu with an improved security situation. The movement of pedestrians and vehicles was seen on Wednesday on the streets of the national capital as usual.

As the festivals of Vijaya Dashami and Deepawali approach, people are busy shopping in the market. Departmental stores, shopping malls and groceries are filled with people. *—PTI*

A family member mourns during the last rites of her kin who was killed in the protests, at Pashupatinath Temple in Kathmandu **PHOTO: PTI**

US openly takes bribes from Israel, says Pak Defence Minister

ISLAMABAD, 17 SEPT

In a surprising statement, Pakistani Defence Minister Khawaja Asif alleged that Pakistan is being unjustly defamed over corruption while pointing fingers at American politicians who, he claims, openly accept bribes from Israel. During an interview with journalist Shahzeb Khanzada on Geo TV, Asif stated, "We are being defamed for taking bribes. American politicians accept bribes from Israel openly. If I have to take bribes, I will do it in a backroom somewhere."

Asif went on to criticize the United States' financial support for Israel, asserting, "We are being defamed, but they do it openly," referring to the military bureaucracy and ruling elite in the US.

His comments come against the backdrop of persistent allegations of corruption in Pakistan. Earlier, Asif had alleged that over half of Pakistan's top diplomats were utilising black money to relocate to Portugal, revealing deep-seated issues within the nation's political framework.

In addition, Asif called for the establishment of a NATO-like military alliance among Islamic nations, terming it a "defensive alliance." *—Agencies*

KASH CLASHES WITH DEMOCRATS, CALLS ONE A 'FRAUD'

WASHINGTON, 17 SEPT

FBI Director Kash Patel clashed with Democrats at a contentious Senate oversight hearing Tuesday, defending his record amid criticism that he has politicised the nation's premier federal law enforcement agency and pursued retribution against Trump's adversaries.

The appearance Tuesday before the Senate Judiciary Committee represented the first oversight hearing of Patel's young but tumultuous tenure.

Senator Adam Schiff questioned Patel over his handling of the Jeffrey Epstein files.

Patel told Schiff his role was to protect it from the "weaponisation of intelligence from the likes of you."

"We have countlessly proven you to be a liar in Russiagate, in 6 January. You are the biggest fraud to ever sit in the United States Senate, you are a disgrace to this institution and an utter coward," Patel retorted. "You are a political buffoon at best."

Patel sought to keep the focus on what he said was a series of accomplishments in fighting violent crime, protecting children from abuse and disrupting the flow of fentanyl. He similarly touted the FBI's work in arresting within 33 hours the man suspected in Charlie Kirk's assassination, but also faced questions for falsely claiming that the subject was in custody before he was even identified. *—PTI*

EU HAS NEW SANCTION PLAN TO STOP ISRAEL

BRUSSELS, 17 SEPT

The European Union laid out Wednesday its toughest plan yet to pressure Israel to end the genocide in Gaza.

Kaja Kallas, the EU's foreign policy chief, urged the 27-member nations to increase tariffs on some Israeli goods and impose sanctions on 10 Hamas leaders, Israeli settlers, and two members of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Cabinet: National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich.

The sanctions would freeze any of the individuals' European assets and ban travel within the EU. The EU is Israel's largest trading partner, so the tariffs might have far-reaching effects on Israel's economy, which is already rattled by the cost of a long war. Roughly 32 million euros (USD 37.5 million) in bilateral funds controlled by European Commission would be suspended.

Israel has said "pressure through sanctions will not work." *—PTI*

'HAD ENOUGH OF HIS HATE'

Kirk's shooter allegedly confessed to his partner

PROVO, 17 SEPT

Twenty-two-year-old Tyler Robinson allegedly confessed to his partner that he assassinated Right-wing activist Charlie Kirk. After he fired a single fatal shot from the rooftop of a building overlooking the outdoor Utah college venue where Kirk was speaking on 10 September, he told his partner to look under his keyboard at their home, where he had left a note which said "I had the opportunity to take out Charlie Kirk and I'm going to take it," court documents revealed.

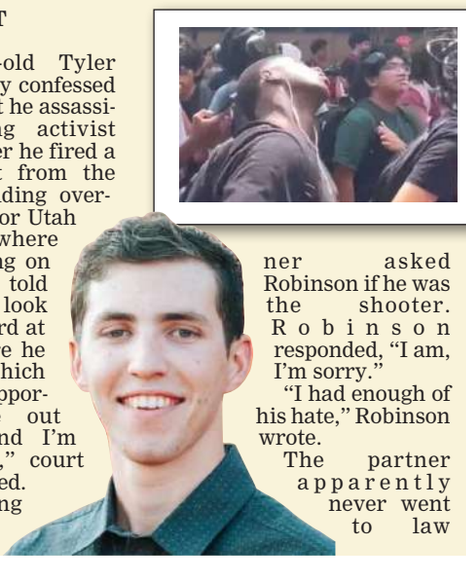
After expressing shock, his partner asked Robinson if he was the shooter. Robinson responded, "I am, I'm sorry."

"I had enough of his hate," Robinson wrote.

The partner apparently never went to law enforcement with the information. Robinson remained on the run until the next night, when his parents recognised he was the person in a photo released by authorities. They helped organise Robinson's peaceful surrender.

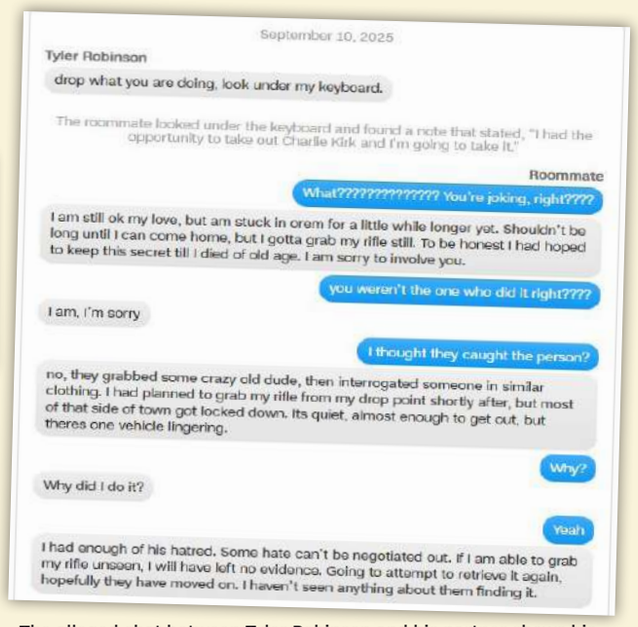
The partner was not named in the charging documents that were made public Tuesday when authorities charged Robinson with capital murder and other counts. He could face the death penalty.

Prosecutors allege Robinson used a bolt-action rifle to shoot Kirk in the neck on the campus. DNA on the trigger of the rifle matched Robinson, according to Utah County Attorney Jeff Gray. The rifle had been Robinson's grandfather's. *—PTI*



Texas student re-enacts Kirk's death, expelled

A Texas State University student mockingly re-enacted Kirk's death and was expelled from the varsity shortly after the video went viral. The incident occurred during a memorial for Kirk. In The student also used profanity towards a local chapter of Turning Point USA, an organisation co-founded by Kirk.


September 10, 2025
Tyler Robinson
drop what you are doing, look under my keyboard.
The roommate looked under the keyboard and found a note that stated, "I had the opportunity to take out Charlie Kirk and I'm going to take it."
Roommate
What?????????????? You're joking, right????
I am still ok my love, but am stuck in orem for a little while longer yet. Shouldn't be long until I can come home, but I gotta grab my rifle still. To be honest I had hoped to keep this secret till I died of old age. I am sorry to involve you.
you weren't the one who did it right????
I am, I'm sorry
I thought they caught the person?
no, they grabbed some crazy old dude, then interrogated someone in similar clothing. I had planned to grab my rifle from my drop point shortly after, but most of that side of town got locked down. Its quiet, almost enough to get out, but theres one vehicle lingering.
Why?
Why did I do it?
Yeah
I had enough of his hatred. Some hate can't be negotiated out. If I am able to grab my rifle unseen, I will have left no evidence. Going to attempt to retrieve it again, hopefully they have moved on. I haven't seen anything about them finding it.

The alleged chat between Tyler Robinson and his partner shows his confession **PHOTO: SCREENGRAB**

Gold retreats from peak level to Rs 1.13 lakh/10g

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

Gold prices retreated from peak levels and traded Rs 1,300 lower at Rs 1,13,800 per 10g in the national capital on Wednesday, as investors rushed to book profits ahead of the US Federal Reserve's policy decision. According to the All India Sarafa Association, gold of 99.5 per cent purity declined by Rs 1,300 to Rs 1,13,300 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes) on Wednesday. On Tuesday, gold of 99.9 per cent and 99.5 per cent purity had jumped Rs 1,800 each to touch a lifetime high of Rs 1,15,100 and Rs 1,14,600 per 10g, respectively, in the Delhi bullion market. Silver too gave up gains and drifted lower, with profit-taking weighing on sentiment. *—PTI*

Rupee rises by 25P, closes at 87.84 against USD

MUMBAI, 17 SEPT

The rupee appreciated 25 paise to close at 87.84 (provisional) against US dollar on Wednesday, tracking a positive trend in domestic equities and supported by optimism over US–India trade negotiations. Forex traders said the Indian rupee strengthened for the fourth consecutive session on Wednesday and rose to the highest level in two and a half weeks on broad weakness of the American currency amid hopes of a US Fed rate cut. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 87.84, then touched an intraday low of 87.71 and a high of 87.86 against the greenback. The domestic unit closed at 87.84 (provisional), registering a gain of 25 paise over its previous close. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

IndiGo appoints Amitabh Kant as additional director

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

IndiGo on Wednesday said Amitabh Kant has been appointed as an additional director on its board with effect from 15 September after receiving security clearance from the civil aviation ministry. On 3 July, the airline had announced the appointment of Kant, a former Niti Aayog CEO and India's G20 Sherpa, to the board. "... the company has received the requisite security clearance dated 15 September, 2025, from MoCA yesterday. Accordingly, Kant's appointment shall be effective from 15 September, 2025," InterGlobe Aviation, the parent of IndiGo, said in a regulatory filing. Kant has been appointed as an Additional Director in the capacity of Non-Executive Non-Independent Director, effective from the date of receipt of security clearance from the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA). *—PTI*

TCS, Qualcomm to launch innovation lab in Bengaluru

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has announced a partnership with Qualcomm to establish an innovation lab in Bengaluru aimed at developing smart and scalable capabilities for enterprises. The 'TCS Innovation Lab' will feature advanced 5G private network infrastructure, focusing on agile IoT solutions across various sectors, like security, surveillance, healthcare, smart infra, and manufacturing, it said. "TCS and Qualcomm will co-create smart, scalable, and sustainable Edge AI capabilities utilising Qualcomm platforms," it stated. The lab will facilitate rapid prototyping and large-scale deployment of solutions using a Software Defined Everything. Savi Soin, Senior Vice President at Qualcomm India, noted, "Together, we aim to develop solutions that are cost-effective, efficient, scalable, and tailored to the needs of enterprises." *—PTI*

India clears 4 ships for EU-sanctioned Nayara

Nayara's non-Russian trade stays stalled due to dollar trade curbs

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

Indian authorities have cleared EU-sanctioned Nayara Energy to use four foreign-flagged ships for coastal transportation of fuels such as petrol and diesel within the country, but its non-Russian overseas trade remains stalled due to the unavailability of banking channels.

The Directorate General of Shipping has approved four foreign-flagged ships being used for the coastal movement of fuel produced by Nayara and efforts are being made to resolve the stalled dollar trade, government officials said.

Nayara Energy did not reply to an email sent for comments.

Nayara's Vadinar Refinery in Gujarat makes about 8 per cent of all fuel consumed in the country. Most of this was shipped from Gujarat to key consumption hubs along the west coast, reaching as far as Odisha on the east.

This supply route was disrupted after the European Union in July imposed sanctions on Nayara. Shipowners wary of attracting secondary EU sanctions halted lifting of products from the Vadinar refinery. Shipping companies also were unable to secure insurance coverage for the voyages from Protection and Indemnity (P&I) clubs, most of which are based in Europe.

While this stalled domestic supplies, Nayara's limited exports - about 25-30 per cent of all products it made - also came to a grinding halt as banks refused to process payments for such sales. Banks also shied away from giving Nayara dollars to help it procure crude oil, which is converted into fuels such as petrol and diesel at its refinery.

In the absence of banking channels and shipping restrictions, Nayara has since August only sourced crude oil from Russia in ships arranged by Russian suppliers. It hasn't been able to buy crude oil from other suppliers such as Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

Officials said UCO Bank was tasked with establishing a mechanism to facilitate dollar payments for Nayara's crude imports & fuel exports. *—PTI*

Nayara's Vadinar Refinery in Gujarat makes about 8 per cent of all fuel consumed in the country

PHOTO: AI

- In the absence of banking channels and shipping restrictions, Nayara has since August only sourced crude oil from Russia in ships arranged by Russian suppliers.

PHOTO: SBI

SBI sells 13% stake in Yes Bank

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

The State Bank of India (SBI), the country's largest lender, has successfully completed the sale of approximately 13.18 per cent of its stake in Yes Bank to Japan's Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC) for Rs 8,888.97 crore.

In a regulatory filing, SBI confirmed that it has received the funds from SMBC, a prominent financial institution that is part of the Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group, known for being one of the leading foreign banks in India and Japan's second-largest banking group with total assets of about USD 2 trillion.

SBI became the largest shareholder in Yes Bank in March 2020 under the government-notified Reconstruction Scheme. It subsequently purchased additional shares during Yes Bank's follow-on public offering in July 2020.

This stake sale marks the largest cross-border investment in the Indian banking sector. The transaction has received all necessary regulatory approvals, including from the Reserve Bank of India and the Competition Commission of India.

SBI Chairman CS Setty remarked, "Yes Bank's restructuring plan by the RBI in 2020 was an innovative, first-of-its-kind public sector-private sector partnership. We are excited to welcome SMBC as a strategic partner, and their global expertise will greatly complement Yes Bank's ongoing progress and future ambitions." *—ANI*

Mkts up amid US trade talk hopes

MUMBAI, 17 SEPT

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty rose for the second day on Wednesday on buying in IT, banking, and auto shares by investors enthused by positive day-long discussions with the visiting US team on a bilateral trade deal.

The 30-share BSE Sensex edged higher by 313.02 points or 0.38 per cent to settle at 82,693.71. During the day, it jumped 361.26 points or 0.43 per cent to 82,741.95.

The 50-share NSE Nifty climbed 91.15 points or 0.36 per cent to 25,330.25.

Growing expectations of a rate cut by the US Federal Reserve and positive US-India discussions on a proposed trade deal helped stock markets extend their rally, analysts said.

Among Sensex firms, State Bank of India, Bharat Electronics, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Maruti, Trent and UltraTech Cement were the major gainers. However, Bajaj Finserv, Titan, ITC and Tata Steel were among the laggards.

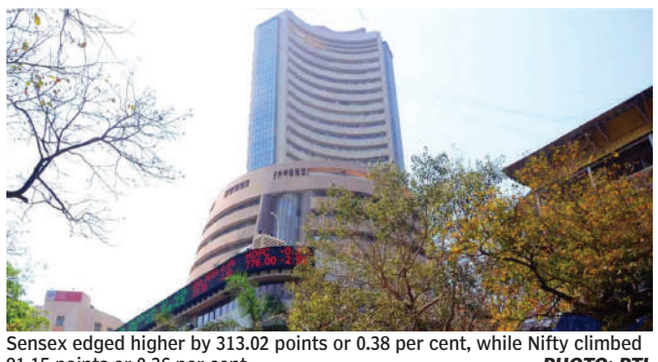
The BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.51 per cent and midcap index went up by 0.19 per cent.

As many as 2,408 stocks advanced while 1,746 declined and 174 remained unchanged on the BSE.

In Asian markets, Shanghai's SSE Composite index and Hong Kong's Hang Seng settled in positive territory while South Korea's Kospi and Japan's Nikkei 225 index ended lower.

Markets in Europe were trading mostly higher. US markets ended lower on Tuesday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.58 per cent to USD 68.07 a barrel. *—PTI*



Sensex edged higher by 313.02 points or 0.38 per cent, while Nifty climbed 91.15 points or 0.36 per cent

PHOTO: PTI

TAX EVASION CHARGES

I-T Dept conducts survey against Marico

MUMBAI, 17 SEPT

The Income Tax Department on Wednesday conducted a survey operation at various business premises of the Marico group on charges of tax evasion, official sources said.

The action is being undertaken by the Mumbai investigation wing of the department.

The tax department teams are scrutinising financial documents and transactions of the company as part of a tax evasion probe, they said.

The company could not be contacted immediately for a comment on the I-T action.

Marico is one of India's leading consumer goods companies operating in the global beauty and wellness categories.

PHOTO: MARICO

As per a company statement, during the 2024-25 fiscal it recorded a turnover of USD 1.3 billion through its products sold in India and chosen markets in Asia and Africa.

As part of a survey operation, the tax department makes a surprise visit at the business premises of the entity under investigation. *—PTI*

Sebi, govt to discuss on funds for non-agri mkt

MUMBAI, 17 SEPT

Sebi will "engage" with the government to allow banks, insurance companies and pension funds to invest in non-agriculture commodity derivative markets, its chairman Tuhin Kanta Pandey said on Wednesday.

He said the capital markets regulator is also looking at a proposal to allow foreign portfolio investors to trade in non-cash settled, non-agricultural commodity derivative contracts. By December-end, Sebi will include commodity-specific brokers in a common reporting mechanism for compliance reports, Pandey pointed out.

Stating that commodity derivative markets play a very important role for the economy, Pandey said India aspires to be the "price-setter" instead of being a "price taker" at the global level.

There is a need to look at how to broaden the acceptance of Indian benchmarks at home and abroad, he said, stressing that in volatile times like the current one, the exchanges can act as a good tool of price insurance and help protect profit margins.

He specifically pointed out that the recent doubling of tariffs on aluminium and copper imports by the US "directly affects" India's export landscape. *—PTI*

MakeMyTrip, Zomato partner for 'Food on Train'

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

Travellers booking train tickets through the MakeMyTrip app can now order from over 40,000 restaurant partners listed on Zomato, available at more than 130 stations. This partnership introduces the 'Food on Train' service, enhancing the customer experience while travelling.

In the fiscal year 2024-25, more than 90,000 rail passengers used Indian Railways'-catering services daily, reflecting a 66 per cent year-on-year growth. MakeMyTrip aims to tap into this demand by offering a range of meals, including breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks, utilising its 'Live Train Status' tool.

"With the launch of our Food on Train Marketplace, we are enhancing the travel experience by providing passengers with greater choice and convenience," said Raj Rishi Singh, Chief Business Officer & Chief Marketing Officer at MakeMyTrip. *—PTI*

GST reforms to infuse ₹2L cr into economy: FM

VISAKHAPATNAM/ NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday said the next generation GST reforms will infuse Rs 2 lakh crore into the economy, leaving people with more cash in hand that otherwise would have gone as taxes.

Addressing the Outreach and Interaction Program on Next Gen GST Reforms, she also said, following the tax reforms, 99 per cent of goods under the 12 per cent GST slab have moved to five per cent. The rejig has resulted in 90 per cent items under 28 per cent tax slab slipping into the 18 per cent bracket.

She said several companies, including some FMCG giants, are voluntarily coming forward to give rate cuts and pass on the benefit to consumers even before the implementation date.

She said before undertaking the rate rejig, the NDA government kept five filters-reduction of rate for poor and middle class, fulfilling aspirations of middle class, benefiting farmers community, pro-MSME and sectors that are useful for the country in creating jobs and export potential.

She highlighted that the GST revenues grew to Rs 22.08 lakh crore in 2025 from Rs 7.19 lakh crore in 2018.

She said the GST Council is a prime example of cooperative federalism, noting it is the only constitutional body created since independence.

Additionally, the GST cut will accelerate India's clean energy transition and can potentially save up to Rs 1.5 lakh crore for adding remaining 300GW capacity by 2030, MNRE said. *—PTI*

New GST, festive season may boost India's gold demand

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

The festive season, cultural demand, and GST reforms could stimulate gold jewellery purchases in India, even as prices reach record highs, according to a report by Mirae Asset Mutual Fund. India and China together account for over 50 per cent of global jewellery demand. The report notes that while consumer spending recovery may enhance urban jewellery purchases in China, "price elasticity may cap demand recovery for the yellow metal," with gold priced above $3,500-3,600 per ounce. It said, gold recently closed at $3,429 per ounce in August, marking a significant year-to-date rise of over 31 per cent, with current prices touching just above $3,700. *—ANI*

RS 23,987 CR MARKET VALUE

Urban Company shares up by 62% in mkt debut

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

Shares of app-based beauty and home services platform Urban Company Ltd on Wednesday ended with a premium of more than 62 per cent over the issue price of Rs 103.

The company's stock started trading at Rs 161, a jump of 56.31 per cent from the issue price on the BSE. During the day, it zoomed 73.78 per cent to Rs 179. Shares of the company ended at Rs 167.05, up 62.18 per cent.

On the NSE, the stock was listed with a premium of 57.52 per cent at Rs 162.25. Shares of the firm ended at Rs 166.83 apiece, up 61.97 per cent.

The company's market valuation stood at Rs 23,986.74 crore.

In volume terms, 149.88 lakh shares of the firm were traded on the BSE and 1,960.31 lakh shares exchanged hands on the NSE during the day.

The initial public offer of Urban Company Ltd received overwhelming investor participation, with the issue getting a huge 103.63 times subscription on the final day of bidding on Friday last week.

The Rs 1,900 crore IPO had a price band of Rs 98-103 per share.

The company plans to use funds raised through the fresh issuance for new technology development and cloud infrastructure, lease payments for its offices, marketing activities, and general corporate purposes.

Urban Company operates a technology-driven, full-stack online marketplace for quality-driven services and solutions across various home and beauty categories. Apart from India, it has a presence in the UAE, Singapore, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Its platform enables consumers to easily order services, including cleaning, pest control, electrical work, plumbing, carpentry, appliance servicing and repair, painting, skincare, hair grooming, and massage therapy. *—PTI*

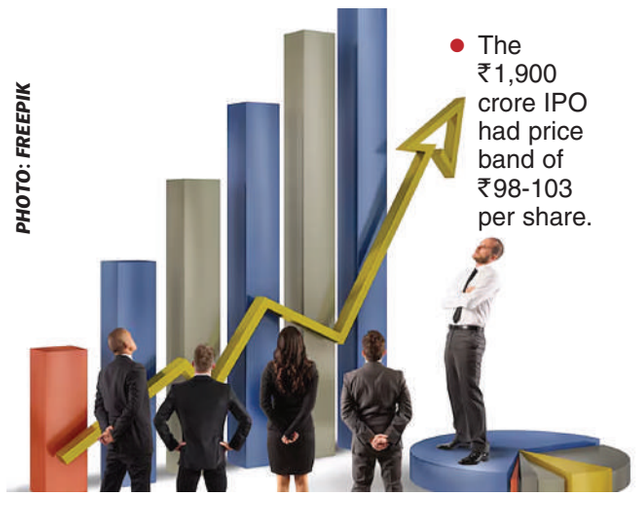


PHOTO: FREEPIK

- The ₹1,900 crore IPO had price band of ₹98-103 per share.

PHOTO: FREEPIK

India's exports to US fall due to high tariffs: GTRI

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

India is witnessing a significant decline in exports to the United States, attributed to high tariffs imposed by the Trump administration that are eroding the price competitiveness of Indian goods. According to the Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), August shipments fell to $6.7 billion, a 16.3 per cent drop from July—the steepest monthly decline in 2025.

July's exports also dipped by 3.6 per cent, following a 5.7 per cent decline in June. The last month of growth was May, when shipments rose to $8.8 billion. "The slide in exports closely tracks the rapid escalation of tariffs," said GTRI Founder Ajay Srivastava.

After the tariffs rose to 50 per cent late in August, the impact will be fully felt in September. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Varun becomes No.1 T20I bowler in ICC rankings

DUBAI, 17 SEPT

Mystery spinner Varun Chakaravarthy on Wednesday rose to the top of the ICC T20 Bowlers' Rankings for the first time in his career, becoming only the third Indian to achieve this feat. The 34-year-old emulated fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah and leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi by moving up three spots following spells of 1/4 against the UAE and 1/24 against Pakistan. Chakaravarthy, whose previous best was second place in February 2025, displaced New Zealand's Jacob Duffy, who had held the top position since March. "India spinner Varun Chakaravarthy has been rewarded for his consistent form in 2025 by becoming the No.1 ranked bowler on the latest ICC Men's T20I Player Rankings," the ICC said in a statement. Left-arm spinner Kuldeep Yadav has made a significant leap, jumping 16 places to 23rd.—*PTI*

Women's Indian Open: Diksha to lead

NEW DELHI, 17 SEPT

Seasoned golfer Diksha Dagar will spearhead the country's challenge at the 17th Hero Women's Indian Open to be played from October 9 to 12 with an enhanced prize purse of USD 500,000. The DLF Golf and Country Club is set to host the event for the 15th time. The winner will earn USD 75,000. Since its inception in 2007, the tournament has showcased the rise of Indian women golfers on the global stage. While Aditi Ashok remains the only Indian to have won the tournament in 2016, recent years have seen multiple Indian players making strong bids for the title, including Amandeep Drall, who was runner-up in 2022, and Diksha, who finished third in 2023.—*PTI*

Aryna Sabalenka withdraws from China Open

NEW YORK, 17 SEPT

Aryna Sabalenka has withdrawn from the China Open due to an injury suffered during her title-winning campaign at Flushing Meadows, organisers said on Wednesday. The Belarusian, who defeated Amanda Anisimova to win a second straight U.S. Open crown and fourth Grand Slam title earlier this month, reached the quarterfinals of the WTA 1000 event in Beijing last year. "I am sad to announce my withdrawal from the China Open this year after sustaining a small injury after the U.S. Open," Sabalenka said in a statement provided by organisers. I am going to focus on being 100% healthy for the rest of the year.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X/@REALMADRID

Mastantuono youngest starter for Real Madrid

MADRID, 17 SEPT

Teenage forward Franco Mastantuono became the youngest player to start for Real Madrid in the Champions League, according to UEFA. At 18 years, 33 days old, Mastantuono started Tuesday in Madrid's league phase opener against Marseille at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium. The Argentine forward beat the mark set last year by Brazil striker Endrick, who was 18 years, 73 days old when he started for Madrid against Lille. Before that, Madrid's youngest Champions League starter from group stage to final had been Raúl González, who was 18 years, 78 days old when he played against Ajax in 1995.—*PTI*

Satwik-Chirag pair enters last-16 at China Masters

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty PHOTO: X/@BWF

SHENZHEN, 17 SEPT

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty entered the men's doubles pre-quarterfinals with a straight-game win, but India's challenge in the men's singles competition ended with Lakshya Sen's first-round ouster from the China Masters badminton tournament here on Wednesday.

Satwik and Chirag, who finished runners-up in last week's Hong Kong Open, eked out a 24-22 21-13 victory over Malaysia's Junaidi Arif and Roy King Yap in 42 minutes, keeping their all-win head-to-head record against them intact.

However, Lakshya, who also finished second last week, lost 11-21, 10-21 to Toma Junior Popov in a 30-minute contest to bring the curtains down on India's men's singles challenge after Ayush Shetty's defeat in his opening match.

The mixed doubles pair of Dhruv Kapila and Tanisha Crasto also made their exit after going down to second-seeded local favourites Feng Yan Zhe and Huang Dong Ping 19-21, 13-21.

Satwik and Chirag were tested a bit in the opening game, which went neck and neck till the end, but the Indian duo eventually edged past to seal it in 21 minutes.

They took an early lead in the second game, but Arif and Yap clawed back to make 5-5. However, the Indians were in no mood to let them fight back and established an 11-6 advantage which the Malaysians could not surpass.

In the women's singles event, P V Sindhu had won her opening match on Monday to make the pre-quarterfinals. She will be up against sixth-seeded Thai Pornpawee Chochuwong in her next outing. —*PTI*

Neeraj Chopra qualifies for World C'ships finals

Chopra will face Pakistan's Olympic gold medallist Arshad

TOKYO, 17 SEPT

Defending champion Neeraj Chopra stormed into the men's javelin throw final of the World Championships in style after clearing the automatic qualification mark of 84.50m in his very first throw here on Wednesday.

The 27-year-old two-time Olympic medallist sent his spear to 84.85m in his first throw in Group A of the qualification round. Defending champion Neeraj Chopra will face Pakistan's Olympic gold medallist Arshad Nadeem in the World Championships finals in a much-anticipated clash between the two cross-border rivals as the duo cut contrasting styles in the qualification round here on Wednesday. While Chopra stormed into the finals after clearing the automatic qualification mark of 84.50m in his very first throw in Group A, Nadeem (85.28m) spent some anxious time before making the grade in his third and final attempt later in Group B.

India's Neeraj Chopra reacts in the men's javelin throw qualification at the World Athletics Championships in Tokyo PHOTO: X/@WORLDS

In fact, Chopra was the first thrower, and he packed up after making it to the final. Those who touch the automatic qualifying mark of 84.50m or the best 12 finishers will make the final round to be held on Thursday.

The 18-strong Group B will feature Olympic champion Arshad Nadeem, Anderson Peters, Julius Yego, Luiz Da Silva, Rohit Yadav, Yashvir Singh, and rising Sri Lankan Rumesh Tharanga, among others. In the last edition in Budapest, Chopra had thrown 88.17m to win the gold, while Nadeem (87.82m) and Vadlejch (86.67m) had pocketed silver and bronze, respectively. Chopra will aim to become the third male javelin thrower in history to defend the World Championships gold. —*PTI*

Eight Indians qualify for ISSF World Cup Final in Doha

DUBAI, 17 SEPT

Eight Indian shooters, including double Olympic medalist Manu Bhaker, have secured their places in the season-ending ISSF World Cup Final scheduled to be held in Doha, Qatar, from 4 to 9 December.

Bhaker is the only Indian shooter to have cut two events the women's 10m air pistol and the women's 25m pistol for the ISSF showpiece, which determines the season's best shooter in each of the 12 individual Olympic events. India will have representation in five of those 12 events. Teenager Suruchi Singh, who dominated the women's 10m air pistol with three back-to-back gold medals in Buenos Aires, Lima, and Munich, not only qualified for Doha but also secured the No. 1 rank in the world in women's air pistol. —*PTI*

SUPER 4 SPOT

Afg aims for fearless cricket against SL

ABU DHABI, 17 SEPT

PHOTO: PTI

Afghanistan will need to play with more flair and freedom in their must-win Asia Cup group match against Sri Lanka here on Thursday.

After their loss to Bangladesh, Afghanistan will need to get past a steady Sri Lanka to have a shot at making the super fours. A win for Afghanistan will leave them, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh on four points each.

However, what could go in their favour is their superior net run rate of 2.150 compared to Bangladesh (-0.270), who are done with their league commitments.

Having reached the semifinals of the T20 World Cup, expectations have increased for the Rashid Khan-led side. The spin-heavy unit is yet to hit top form in the Asia Cup, especially with the bat.

Afghanistan were expected to chase 155 against Bangladesh on Tuesday night, but got themselves into a hole they could never get out of.

"We haven't played the type of cricket we are famous for - attacking cricket. We let a lot of pressure build on ourselves. The way we came back with the ball to restrict them under 160 was special, but with the batting, we played some irresponsible shots.

"In T20 sometimes the opposition takes the game away in the first six overs, but then you have to come back," a visibly disappointed Rashid said after the defeat.

Afghanistan vs Sri Lanka
Match starts at
8.00 pm IST

DP WORLD ASIA CUP 2025

Sri Lanka, which has won both their games, too, would be looking for an improved batting performance, having got itself into a precarious situation in the chase against Hong Kong.

Captain Charith Asalanka knows they would need to be much more professional against a wounded Afghanistan.

"We are professionals and we have to do much better," said Asalanka. —*PTI*

Smriti Mandhana brought up a 77-ball century PHOTO: PTI

Smriti ton hands India first win at home

SINGAPORE, 6 JUNE

Eighteen years and 206 days. It was a long wait. One in which cricket careers started and ended. India finally broke the duck by winning a home ODI against Australia for the first time since 2007. The 102-run margin may seem big, but it was not easy coming.

It took a spirited bowling show from India following Smriti Mandhana's splendid century to draw level in the three-match series.

Riding on Mandhana's 12th ODI century, India posted 292, a total that seemed lower than what they should have got.

In response, India's seamers first stifled the top order and then the spinners squeezed the middle order to hand Australia their biggest ODI defeat. All this after being thrashed in the opening match at the same venue.

With Shafali Verma no longer part of ODI plans, Mandhana has transitioned into being an aggressor and got to her century in just 77 balls, the second-quickest for India.

Deepti Sharma made 40 off 53 balls but couldn't hit just two fours. Darcie Brown picked up three wickets, having found her rhythm towards the end of the innings.

India 292 (Mandhana 117, Deepti 40, Brown 3-42, Gardner 2-39) beat Australia190 (Sutherland 45, Perry 44, Goud 3-28, Deepti 2-24) by 102 runs. —*PTI*

Ukraine reaches Billie Jean King Cup semifinals

PARIS, 17 SEPT

Ukraine reached the semifinals of the Billie Jean King Cup for the first time with gritty performances from Elina Svitolina and Marta Kostyuk against Spain on Wednesday in Shenzhen. Svitolina defeated Paula Badosa 5-7, 6-2, 7-5 to wrap up the quarterfinal tie for Ukraine in the women's team competition. Kostyuk beat Jessica Bouzas Maneiro 7-6 (7/3), 6-2 earlier in the day.

The Ukrainians will now take on defending champion Italy on Friday. —*PTI*

PAKISTAN STAY ON

ICC rejects Pakistan demand for Andy Pycroft removal

DUBAI, 17 SEPT

Pakistan's cricket team finally headed to the stadium for its must-win Asia Cup group match against the UAE here on Wednesday after causing a dramatic delay to protest ICC's persistent rejection of the country's demand to have Andy Pycroft removed as match referee.

"The team has left for the stadium, the match will be delayed by an hour," Tournament sources told PTI.

Pakistan had held Pycroft responsible for the embarrassment it faced after Indian players refused to shake hands following their match on Sunday as a gesture of solidarity with the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack. Pakistan may have withdrawn the threat to pull out of the Asia Cup, but their objection to match referee Andy Pycroft still stands, said on Wesnesday and the PCB has shot off another letter to the ICC demanding that the Zimbabwean be swapped with Richie Richardson for the team's remaining games.

Andy PHOTO: PTI

It has been reliably learnt that late on Tuesday evening, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) sent another mail to the ICC reiterating the demand to remove Pycroft from all its games, but as of now, it hasn't been obliged by the world body. —*PTI*

Antim to fight for bronze; Jyoti, Radhika eliminated

Antim Panghal PHOTO: PTI

ZAGREB, 17 SEPT

Young wrestler Antim Panghal was left to fight for a bronze medal after being outwitted by Paris Olympics silver medallist Lucia Yepez Guzman in the women's 53kg semifinals, while Manisha Bhanwala (62kg) stayed in the medal race via repechage route at the World Championships, here on Wednesday.

However, Radhika (68kg) and Jyoti Beriwal (72 kg) were eliminated on day five of the prestigious tournament.

Antim, targeting her second World Championship medal after a bronze in the 2023 edition, had an easy start to her campaign when she knocked out Spaniard Carla Jaume Soner in mere 23 seconds, but found a tough rival in China's Zhang, whom she edged past 9-8 in the quarterfinals.

Antim effected a decisive take-down move in the dying moments against Zhang to prevail in the tight contest.

However, Guzman proved to be a superior rival, who dominated the contest to win 5-3.

There was no attacking move by either of the wrestlers in the first minute. Antim attempted a right leg attack, but Guzman was alert to thwart the attempt. Guzman scored a four-pointer to pull away as she ducked under and rolled the Indian.

The fast-paced first period ended with Guzman leading 4-1. —*PTI*

OLYMPIC CHAMPION

Dalilah Muhammad's last race in Tokyo

TOKYO, 17 SEPT

Dalilah Muhammad is about to run her last race. For the two-time Olympic and two-time world champion and former world-record holder in the 400-meter hurdles, it's the right time and Tokyo is the right place.

"I don't feel any nervousness, and I don't know if that's a good thing or a bad thing," the 35-year-old American said Wednesday after qualifying fourth and advancing to Friday's final at the track and field world championships.

"But I think it's a good thing just knowing how to enjoy these moments."

Thomas Partey PHOTO: X/@DALILAH

She wanted to step away a year ago at the Paris Olympics, but she failed to qualify from the U.S. trials, slowed by an Achilles injury that also troubled her in 2023.

"We had to take down the year," she said of last season.

Femke Bol of the Netherlands led qualifiers for the finals in 52.31 seconds, followed by Gianna Woodruff of Panama (52.66), American Jasmine Jones (53.01), and Muhammad (53.14).

Jones came off the track on Wednesday and, though she said she doesn't know Muhammad well, has childhood images of the biggest star in hurdling at the time.

"I watched her on TV when I was in high school, middle school," said the 23-year-old Jones. "So getting to race her is a big honor."

Muhammad is back in Tokyo, and it's the perfect place for the farewell. It was in a virtually empty stadium for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, delayed a year by the COVID pandemic, that she ran the fastest time of her life.

Unfortunately, she was only the silver medalist behind Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone. McLaughlin-Levrone broke the world record in 51.46. —*PTI*

Nunez and Hernandez score for Al-Hilal in ACL win

RIYADH, 17 SEPT

PHOTO: X/@ACL

New signings Darwin Nunez and Theo Hernandez scored in Al-Hilal's 2-1 victory over Al-Duhail of Qatar in the opening round of the Asian Champions League.

Nunez and Hernandez, signed by the Saudi club in the summer from Liverpool and AC Milan respectively, scored in the second half after Algerian forward Adil Boulbina had given Al-Duhail the lead after 37 minutes.

Al-Hilal hung on to give Simone Inzaghi his first Asian win as head coach since the Italian joined from Inter Milan in June.

Fellow Saudi Arabian team and defending champion Al-Ahli came from two goals down to beat Nasaf Qarshi of Uzbekistan 4-2 on Monday. French midfielder Enzo Millot scored twice in the second half to level the scoreline in Jeddah, and then Riyad Mahrez put Ahli ahead in injury time. Mohammed Sulaiman is to add a fourth.

Also, on Monday, Saudi Pro League champion Al-Ittihad lost 2-1 at Al-Wahda of the United Arab Emirates. Steven Bergwijn put Al-Ittihad ahead in the first half. —*PTI*